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History of the Christian  
church



















HISTORY  
OF THE  
CHRISTIAN CHURCH,  
FROM ITS  
ORIGIN TO THE PRESENT TIME;  
COMPILED FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS.  
INCLUDING A HISTORY OF THE  
CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

Drawn from Authentic Documents.

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BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH.

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Nashville, Tenn.:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN OFFICE.

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1835.

WISDOM

OF THE

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

OF THE

OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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BY THE REV. J. M. G. M. M.

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OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

OF THE



## P R E F A C E.

THE Lord Jesus is infinitely the most illustrious personage that ever has appeared on the theatre of human life. The design of His mission was of the most grand and important nature; to abolish the dominion of Satan, who had usurped the throne of God in the hearts of men; to revolutionize the nations of the earth; to emerge mankind from a state of ignorance, vice and misery, to a state of knowledge, holiness and happiness, and to affect their destinies during the interminable ages of Eternity. From His first appearance in our world until the present day, a continued warfare has been carried on between the powers of light and darkness. That warfare will not cease until the Son of man shall conquer all his enemies, and truth and righteousness shall fill the whole earth. And the last scene of the grand drama, which for so many ages, has been acting in our world shall be exhibited on that tremendous day, when HE shall descend from heaven in all the glory of the Godhead, attended by his holy Angels: when HE shall sit on the great white Throne of his glory as UNIVERSAL JUDGE; and before his Judgment Seat shall be assembled all human beings, with Satan and all his angels, their seducers—And when HE shall have pronounced sentence upon the innumerable millions before him—the curtain shall fall—and TIME SHALL BE NO LONGER. *why not rise*

Therefore, all men, especially all Christians, should feel a deep interest in the rise and progress of the Church of Jesus Christ. They should be familiarly acquainted with the history of the temporary successes of his enemies; the sufferings and persecutions encountered by his followers, and the glorious revolutions effected among the nations of the earth by the preaching of Christ, to



them that believe the hope of Glory: although to the Jews He is a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. Many worthies have written on these important subjects, but their works are generally too voluminous to be read by the great mass of the community. Therefore, the subscriber believed that he would render good service to the Church of Christ by presenting to the public a condensed history of its rise and progress until the present day. Instead of abridging one author, he has endeavored to make judicious selections from several, which are interspersed with occasional remarks of his own. In compiling the work he has been chiefly indebted to Milner, Jones, Gregory, and Hawies.

To the history of the General Church the subscriber has appended a history of the origin, progress and operations of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. He believed it important that the members of this branch of the Church of Jesus Christ should possess correct information concerning the various causes that led its founders to establish a new denomination; with the movements of its ministers and members, and the success attending their efforts until the present time. A work of this nature has been loudly called for, from the fact, that various and discrepant accounts of the causes of the separation from the Presbyterian Church have been published to the world. The subscriber possessed the manuscripts of Rev'd James M'Gready and Wm. Hodge, among which he found many important documents relative to the revival of 1800, in which the Cumberland Presbyterian body originated; and also relative to the difficulties between Cumberland Presbytery and Kentucky Synod. He also possessed authentic copies of the minutes of the Presbyterian judicatures concerned in these difficulties. And being stated Clerk of the General As-



sembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, he had under his control all the public documents of that body from the constitution of the first Presbytery until the present time. And believing it probable that no other person might at any future period possess the same facilities, he felt himself called upon to preserve these important documents from oblivion:—and after consulting with the members of the General Assembly of 1834, and obtaining their approbation, he resolved to prepare a history of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, drawn from authentic documents in his possession.

It is probable that facts are stated in this work, concerning the difficulties between the Cumberland Presbytery and Kentucky Synod, which may give offence to some. But as he has laid before the readers, documents from both parties, they can have a fair opportunity to form their own judgment, which they no doubt will do, regardless of the opinions expressed by the author. As the object of the work is not to amuse but to exhibit truth, he has paid little attention to elegance of style, especially, as he was aware that the great majority of those who will be his readers are a plain people.

In the appendix the reader will find a brief notice of some of the departed brethren engaged in the difficulties which led to the formation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. We have not noticed those departed brethren who became attached to the Church after its formation; as Rev. F. R. Cossit, has in contemplation to publish a work, entitled, “The Fathers of the Church.”

Should this work be instrumental in advancing the great interests of the Redeemer’s Kingdom, the subscriber’s highest end will be attained.

JAMES SMITH.

*Nashville, 28th March, 1835.*

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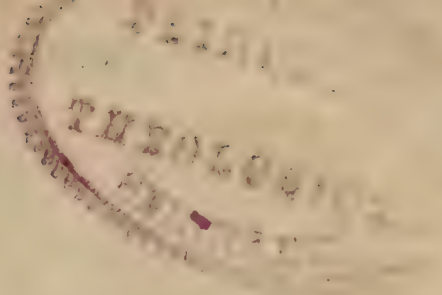
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# HISTORY

## OF THE

# CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

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### CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

STATE OF THE WORLD IN GENERAL AT THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.  
—THE RELIGION OF THE GREEKS AND ROMANS.—THE RELIGION OF THE JUDEANS, EGYPTIANS, PERSIANS AND CELTS.—VIEW OF THE DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF GENTILE PHILOSOPHY.—OF ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY.—ON THE STATE OF THE JEWISH NATION AT THE PERIOD OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

THE astonishing and ameliorating influence which the religion of Christ has exercised upon all the nations of the earth, by which it has been embraced, render an impartial account of its rise and progress interesting, not only to the sincere disciple of Christ, but to all classes of reflecting men. Before we enter upon this very interesting subject, it may be proper to pause, and take a cursory view of the state of the world in the age in which the Christian dispensation had its commencement.

The inspired historians have particularly specified the time of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, as being under the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus, and when Herod the great was king of Judea. At this period the Roman empire was in the zenith of its power; it had reduced the greatest part of the habitable earth under the dominion of its arms; and even the land of Judea had sunk into a province of this mighty empire.

The Roman empire, at this epoch, extended from the river Euphrates in the East, to the Atlantic Ocean in the West. In length it was more than three thousand miles; in breadth it was more than two thousand, and the whole included above sixteen thousand square miles. This vast extent of territory lay between the twenty-fourth and fifty-sixth degrees of northern latitude, which being the most eligible part of the temperate zone, it produced all the conveniences and luxuries of life.

From the days of Ninus, who lived about three hundred years after the flood, to those of Augustus Cæsar, was a period of two thousand years; in which interval, various empires, kingdoms, and states had gradually arisen and succeeded each other. The Assyrian or Babylonian empire may be said to have taken the lead. It not only had the precedence in point of time, but it was the cradle of Asiatic elegance and arts, and exhibited the first examples of that refinement and luxury which have distinguished every subsequent age in the annals of the east. But that gigantic power gave place to the empire of the Medes and Persians, which itself, in the process of time, yielded to the valor of the Greeks; while the empire of Greece, so renowned for splendor in arts and arms, had sunk under the dominion of Imperial Rome, who thus became mistress of all the civilized world.

ROME is said to have owed her dominion as much to the manners as to the arms of her citizens. Whenever the latter had subdued a particular territory, they prepared to civilize it.— They transferred into each of the conquered countries their laws, manners, arts, sciences, and literature. The advantages that resulted from bringing so many nations into subjection under one people, or to speak more properly, under one man, were no doubt, in many respects, considerable. For by this means the people of various countries, alike strangers to each other's language, manners, and laws, became associated together in amity, and enjoyed reciprocal intercourse. By Roman munificence, which spared no expense to render the public roads commodious to travelers, an easy access was given to parts the most distant and remote. Literature and the Arts became generally diffused, and the cultivation of them extended even to countries that had previously formed no other scale by which to estimate the dignity of a man, than that of corporeal vigor, or muscular strength. In short, men that had hitherto known no other rules of action, or modes of life, than those of savage and uncultivated nature, had now before them the example of a polished nation, and were gradually instructed by their conquerors to form themselves after it. These things deserve mention, because, as they contributed in some measure to facilitate the propagation of the gospel by the labors of the apostles, they may consequent-



ly be entitled to rank among those concurring events which constituted the period of our Lord's advent, "the fulness of time."

The subjects of the Roman empire, at this period, have been estimated at about one hundred and twenty millions of persons, and divided into three classes; namely, Citizens, Provincials, and Slaves. The first class enjoyed ample liberty and were entitled to peculiar immunities; thesecond had only the shadow of liberty, without any constitutional freedom; while the last were entirely dependent on the arbitrary will of their masters, who, as best suited their purpose, either enfranchised, or oppressed, or barbarously punished and destroyed them. Enthusiastic in the cause of liberty themselves, the Romans studied the most prudent method of rendering the provinces of the empire insensible to the yoke that was imposed on them. They treated willing captives with commendable liberality; and used the conquered countries with that moderation which evinced that their leading object was, not the destruction of mankind, but the increase of the empire. They colonized foreign countries with Romans, who introduced agriculture, arts, sciences, learning and commerce. Having made the art of governing a particular branch of study, they excelled in it above all the inhabitants of the globe. Their history indeed, exhibits wise councils, prudent measures, equitable laws, and all classes of men are represented to us as conducting themselves so as to command the admiration of posterity.

Having thus briefly glanced at the state of civilization which prevailed in the Roman Empire at the date of the Christian era, we shall quit the subject, in order to examine more particularly its condition with regard to morals and religion; for it is with these that the history of the Christian church is more especially concerned. And that we may have a more enlarged and distinct view of the matter, it may be profitable for us to go back in our inquiries, and take a rapid glance at the state of the Gentile world from a much earlier period. The prophet Isaiah, rapt in prophetic vision, and transported to that distant age when God should perform the mercy promised to the fathers, breaks out into the following sublime strains: "Behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee." Much has been said of late respecting the sufficiency of reason to direct the human mind in its pursuit of the chief good, or of the knowledge of the true character of God and of obedience to his will: the inquiry on which we are entering may possibly serve to evince how far such representations are entitled to regard, and perhaps tend to prove the truth of the apostle's assertion, that "the world by wisdom knew not God."

Our knowledge of the state of any of those nations which were situated beyond the confines of the Roman Empire, is necessarily very imperfect and obscure, arising from the fewness of their historical monuments and writers. We have sufficient light however, to perceive that the eastern nations were distinguished by a low and servile spirit, prone to slavery and every species of abject humiliation; whilst those towards the north, prided themselves in cherishing a warlike and savage disposition, that scorned even the restraint of a fixed habitation, and placed its chief gratification in the liberty of roaming at large through scenes of devastation, blood, and slaughter. A soft and feeble constitution, both of body and mind, with powers barely adequate to the cultivation of the arts of peace, and chiefly exercised in ministering at the shrine of voluptuous gratification, may be considered as the characteristic trait of the former: a robust and vigorous corporeal frame, animated with a glowing spirit that looked with contempt on life, and every thing by which its cares are soothed, that of the latter.

The minds of the people inhabiting these various countries, were fettered by superstitions of the most degrading nature. Though the sense of a Supreme Being, from whom all things had their origin, and whose decrees regulate the universe, had not become wholly extinct; yet in every nation a general belief prevailed, that all things were subordinate to an association of powerful spirits, who were called gods, and whom it was incumbent on every one, who wished for a happy and prosperous course of life, to worship and conciliate. One of these deities was supposed to excel the rest in dignity, and to possess a super-eminent authority, by which the tasks or offices of the inferior ones were allotted, and the whole of the assembly, in a certain degree, directed and governed. His rule, however, was not conceived, to be by any means arbitrary; neither was it supposed that he could so far invade the provinces of the others, as to interfere with their particular functions; and hence it was deemed necessary for those who would secure the favor of heaven, religiously to cultivate the patronage of every separate deity, and assiduously to pay that homage to each of them which was respectively his due.

Every nation, however, did not worship the same gods, but each had its peculiar deities, differing from those of other countries, not only in their names, but in their nature, their attributes, their actions, and other respects: nor is there any just foundation for the supposition which some have adopted, that the gods of Greece and Rome were the same with those who were worshipped by the Germans, the Syrians, the Arabians, the Persians, the Egyptians, and others. The Greeks and



Romans, indeed, pretended that the deities which they acknowledged were equally revered in every other part of the world; and it might probably be the case with most nations, that the gods of other countries were held in a sort of secondary reverence, and perhaps in some instances, privately worshipped; but it is certain that each country had its appropriate deities, and that to neglect or disparage *the established worship of the state* was always considered as an offence of the most atrocious kind.

This diversity of deities and religious worship seldom generated animosity; for each nation readily conceded to others the right of forming their own opinions, and of judging for themselves in religious matters; and they left them, both in the choice of their deities and mode of worshipping them, to be guided by whatever principles they might think proper to adopt. Those who were accustomed to regard this world in the light of a commonwealth, divided into several districts, over each of which a certain order of deities presided, could with an ill grace assume the liberty of forcing other nations to discard their own favorite deities, and receive in their stead the same objects of adoration with themselves. It is certain that the Romans were extremely jealous of introducing any new divinities, or of making the least change in the public religion; yet the citizens were never denied the privilege of individually conforming to any foreign mode of worship, or of manifesting, by the most solemn acts of devotion, their veneration for the gods of other countries.

The principal deities of most nations consisted of heroes renowned in antiquity, emperors, kings, founders of cities, and other illustrious persons, whose eminent exploits, and the benefits they had conferred on mankind, were treasured up and embalmed in the breasts of posterity, by whose gratitude they were crowned with divine honors and raised to the rank of gods. But in no other respects were the Heathen deities supposed to be distinguished beyond the human species, than by the enjoyment of power and an immortal existence. But to the worship of divinities of this description, was joined in many countries that of some of the noblest and most excellent parts of the creation; the luminaries of heaven in particular, the sun, the moon, and the stars, in whom, as the effects of their influence was always perceptible, an intelligent mind was supposed to reside. The superstitious practices of some countries were carried to an almost endless extreme: mountains, rivers, trees, the earth, the sea and the winds, even the diseases of the body, the virtues and the vices (or rather certain tutelary genii, to whom the guardianship and care of all these things was conceived to be-



long) were made the object of adoration, and had divine honors regularly paid to them.

Buildings of the most superb and magnificent kind, under the names of temples, fanes, &c., were raised and dedicated by the people of almost every country to their gods, with the expectation that the divinities would condescend to make these sumptuous edifices the places of their own immediate residence. They were not all open to the public, for some of them were confined to the exercises of private devotion; but those of either description were internally ornamented with images of their deities, and furnished with altars and the requisite apparatus for offering sacrifice. The statues were supposed to be animated by the deities whom they represented: for though the worshippers of gods, such as have now been described, must in a great measure, have relinquished every dictate of reason, they were not willing to appear by any means so destitute of every principle of common sense, as to pay their adoration to a mere idol of metal, or wood, or stone; they always maintained that their statues, *when properly consecrated*, were filled with the presence of those divinities whose impress they bore.

The religious homage paid to these deities, consisted chiefly in the frequent performance of various rites; such as the offering up of victims and sacrifices, accompanied by prayers and other ceremonies. The sacrifices and offerings were different, according to the nature and attributes of the gods to whom they were addressed. Brute animals were commonly devoted to this purpose; but in some nations of a more savage and ferocious character, the horrible practice of sacrificing human victims prevailed. And it has been remarked by the learned Bishop Warburton, that the attributes and qualities assigned to their gods, always corresponded with the nature and genius of the government of the country. If this was gentle, benign, compassionate and forgiving, goodness and mercy were considered as most essential to the deity; but if severe, inexorable, captious or unequal, the very gods were supposed to be tyrants; and expiations, atonements, lustrations, and bloody sacrifices, then composed the system of religious worship. In the words of the Poet,

“Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,  
Whose attributes were rage, revenge or lust;  
Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,  
And, form’d like tyrants, tyrants would believe.”

Of the prayers of Pagan worshippers, whether we regard the matter or the mode of expression, it is impossible to speak favorably: they were not only destitute, in general, of every thing

allied to the spirit of piety, but were sometimes framed expressly for the purpose of obtaining the countenance of heaven to the vilest undertakings. Indeed the greater part of their religious observances were of an absurd and ridiculous kind, and in many instances strongly tinged with the most disgraceful barbarism and obscenity. Their festivals and other solemn days were polluted by a licentious indulgence in every species of libidinous excess; and on these occasions, they were not prohibited even from making their consecrated places, the supposed mansions of their gods, the scenes of vile and beastly gratification.

The care of the temples, together with the superintendence and direction of all religious ordinances, was committed to a class of men bearing the titles of priests or *flamens*. It belonged to the province of these ministers to see that the ancient and customary honors were paid to the publicly acknowledged deities, and that a due regard was manifested in every other respect for the religion of the state. These were their ordinary duties; but superstition ascribed to them functions of a far more exalted nature. It considered them rather in the light of intimate and familiar friends of the gods, than in that of officiating ministers at their altar; and constantly attributed to them the highest degree of sanctity influence, and power. With the minds of the people thus prepossessed in their favor, it could not be very difficult for an artful and designing set of men, possessed of a competent share of knowledge, to maintain a system of spiritual dominion of the most absolute and tyrannical kind.

Besides the public worship of the Pagan deities, several nations, such, for instance, as the Persians, the Greeks, the Egyptians, the Indians, and some others, had recourse to a dark and concealed species of worship, under the name of MYSTERIES. None were admitted to see or participate of these mysteries, but such as had approved themselves worthy of that distinction by their fidelity and perseverance in the practice of a long course of initiatory forms. The votaries were enjoined, on peril of instant death, to observe the most profound secrecy respecting every thing that passed. According to the learned Warburton, each of the Heathen deities, besides the worship paid to him in public, had a secret worship, which was termed *the mysteries of the god*. Those, however, were not performed in every place where he was publicly worshipped, but only where his chief residence was supposed to be. We learn from Herodotus, Diodorus, and Plutarch, that these mysteries were first invented in Egypt, from whence they spread into most countries of Europe and Asia. In Egypt they were celebrated to the



honor of the Isis and Osiris; in Asia to Mythras; in Samothrace to the mother of the gods; in Boeotia to Bacchus; in the isle of Cyprus to Venus; in Crete to Jupiter; in Athens to Ceres and Proserpine; and in other places to other deities of an incredible number. The most noted of these mysteries were the Orphic, those in honor of Bacchus, the Elusinian, the Samothracian, the Cabiri, and the Mythraic. But the Eleusinian, mysteries, which were statedly celebrated by the people of Athens, at Eleusis, a town of Attica, in honor of Ceres and her daughter Proserpine, in process of time supplanted all the rest; for according to the testimony of Zosimus, "*These wholly rites were then so extensive, as to take in the whole race of mankind.*" This sufficiently accounts for the fact, that ancient writers have spoken more of the Eleusinian mysteries than of any other. They all, nevertheless, proceeded from one fountain, consisted of similar rites, and are supposed to have had the same object in view.

We are informed by the same learned prelate, Warburton, that the general object of these mysteries was, by means of certain shows and representations, accompanied with hymns, to impress the senses and imaginations of the initiated with the belief of the doctrines of religion, according to the views of them which the inventors of the mysteries entertained. And in order that the mystic exhibitions might make the deeper impressions on the initiated, they were always performed in the darkness of night. The mysteries were divided into two classes, the lesser and the greater; the former were intended for the common people—the latter for those in higher stations, and of more cultivated understandings. But if the design of these mysteries really was, as some have conjectured, to impress the mind of the initiated with just notions of God, of Providence, and of a future state, it is demonstrable that they must have been grossly perverted from their original intent. Bishop Warburton, who stiffly contends for this honor in their primary institution, is obliged to admit that the orgies of Bacchus, and the mysteries of the mother of the gods, and of Venus, and of Cupid, being celebrated in honor of deities who were supposed to inspire and to preside over the sensual appetites, it was natural for the initiated to believe that they honored these divinities when they committed the vicious actions of which they were the patrons. He further acknowledges, that the mysteries of these deities being performed during nocturnal darkness, or in gloomy recesses, and under the seal of the greatest secrecy, the initiated indulged themselves, on these occasions, in all the abominations with which the object of their worship was supposed to be delighted. In fact, the enormities committed in celebrating the mysteries

of these impure deities ultimately became so intolerable, that their rites were proscribed in various countries, as those of Bacchus were at Rome.\* And from this short account of the matter, we may learn how properly the apostle Paul denominated these boasted Heathen mysteries, "*the unfruitful works of darkness*," Eph. v. 11.—works unproductive of any good either to those who performed them, or to society: and how very properly he prohibited Christians from joining in or "*having any fellowship with them*;" because the things that were done in them, under the seal of secrecy, were such as it was even base to mention, ver. 12. Warburton assures us, that while all the other mysteries became exceedingly corrupt, through the folly or wickedness of those who presided at their celebration, and gave occasion to many abominable impurities, by means of which the manners of the Heathen were entirely vitiated, the Elusinian mysteries long preserved their original purity. But at last they also, yielding to the fate of all human institutions, partook of the common depravity, and had a very pernicious influence on the morals of mankind. In proportion therefore as the gospel made its progress in the world, the Elusinian mysteries themselves fell into disrepute; and, together with all the other Pagan solemnities, were at length suppressed.

At the time of the birth of Christ, the religion of Rome, or to speak more properly, the established superstition of the empire, had been received, together with its government and laws, by a great part of the then known world. Much of this system of superstition had been borrowed from the Greeks; and hence the propriety of classing the religion of the two people under one head. There was, however, a difference between the two, and in some points rather material. The framers of the Grecian system seem to have admitted the existence of one supreme, intelligent, great first cause, the author of every thing, visible and invisible, and the supreme governor of the world; but they did not think it either necessary or proper to impart this idea to the multitude, whose gross conceptions they thought might be amused by a variety of fabulous tales, and whose hopes and fears would be more excited by a plurality of deities than by the unity of an overruling power. The divinities first introduced in consequence of this opinion, were the sun, and the principal planets, to which were soon added the elements of fire, air, earth, and water. These fictitious deities were invested with the human form, and all the passions incident to human nature were

\*Livy's *Roman History*, book xxxix.



attributed to them. The fabricated tales of their adventures, comprehended an indulgence of the most vicious propensities, and the perpetration of enormous crimes. The Greeks adored Jupiter as at the head of the celestial association, the protector of mankind, and governor of the universe; while their philosophers, who appear in general to have been Atheists, by this personage typified the higher region of the air; and by his wife (Juno) the lower atmosphere diffused between the heavens and the sea. And whilst the common people paid homage to Cybele, as the mother of the gods, the more refined part of the nation intended nothing more than the earth by that object of worship. Fire was deified, and the great body of water had also its divine representative. Appolo was the sun, and the moon was his sister, Artemis, or Diana. Thus by the fertile imagination of the Greeks, their deities were gradually multiplied to a remarkable excess; indeed the poet, Hesiod, swells the amount to THIRTY THOUSAND! According to their mythology, all parts of nature teemed with divine agents, and a system which it must be owned was in some respects elegantly fanciful, was characterized under other views, by features of the grossest absurdity.

Worship was originally offered to their deities in the open air, in groves, or upon eminences; but the Greeks, in the progress of their superstition, were led to believe that their deities would be better pleased with the erection of buildings peculiarly devoted to their service; and temples, at first simple and unadorned, afterwards magnificent and sumptuous were the fruits of this opinion. Of the extent to which this point was ultimately carried, we have indeed a striking instance in the case of the temple of Diana, at Ephesus, the length of which, Pliny tells us, was 425 feet, and in breadth 220. It was supported by 107 pillars, each of them 60 feet high. This magnificent structure was erected at the expense of all Asia, and 250 years were spent in finishing it. At first these temples were without images; but in process of time wooden figures of their gods were exhibited for public reverence. Stone or marble was soon deemed preferable for this use; metals of various kinds were also adopted; and the rudeness of early fabrication was succeeded by elegant workmanship.

Sacrifices formed an essential part of the superstitious worship of the Greeks, as well as of the Romans. Grateful respect for the favors conferred on them by their imaginary deities,—the desire of averting their anger after the commission of any offence,—and an eagerness to secure their blessing on a projected enterprise, were the inducements to these oblations. Herbs were the earliest offerings, and it was usual to burn them



that the smoke might ascend towards heaven. Barley and cakes made of that grain, were afterwards substituted for ordinary herbs; and ultimately some of the most useful animals were immolated at their altars, upon which also milk, oil, and wine were poured. Those who served at the altar, were required to prepare themselves by abstaining even from lawful pleasures for one or more preceding days; and all who entered the temples, on these occasions, dipped their hands in consecrated water. When the people were assembled about the altar, the priest sprinkled them with holy water, and offered up a short prayer for them: he next examined the victim, to ascertain its freedom from defects or blemishes; prayer was then resumed; frankincense was strewed upon the altar; hymns were sung; the animal was killed with ceremonious precision; pieces of its flesh were offered and burnt as first-fruits, and the principal devotees carried off the rest.

The religious system which Romulus planted on the banks of the Tiber corresponded pretty much with that of Greece as above described. A multiplicity of divine beings, graciously superintending human affairs, formed the prevailing creed. All the deities had priests and ministers, sacrifices and oblations. The augurs, or soothsayers, in whose art or imposture the founder of Rome excelled, were considered as an important and necessary part of the establishment. Each tribe had one of these pretended prophets, who announced the will of the gods with regard to any future enterprise, from an observance of the flight or the noise of birds, from the feeding of poultry, the movement of beasts, and other appearances. The high priest and his associates not only regulated the public worship, but acted as judges in all cases which had any reference to religion, and exercised a censorial and authoritative jurisdiction over inferior ministers.

When a sacrifice was intended, a solemn procession was made to the temple of some deity. In the first place a *præco*, or public crier, called the attention of the people to the pious work: then appeared the flute-players and harpers, performing in their best manner. The victims followed, wearing white fillets, with their horns gilt. As soon as the priest reached the altar, he prayed to the gods, imploring pardon for his sins, and a blessing upon his country. Having commanded all impure and vicious persons to withdraw, he threw grain, meal, and frankincense upon the heads of the animals, and poured wine between the horns of each; and, having first scored them on the back, he gave orders to his attendants to slay them. The entrails were closely inspected, and from their particular appearance, omens were deduced, or inferred, supposing the gods

to intimate their will by such minutiae to sagacious and devout observers. Some portions of the flesh were then placed upon the altar, for the gratification of that deity to whose honor the temple had been reared—the remainder was divided among the attendant votaries.

The Romans in general knew the whole to be an imposition, and many of them ridiculed the pretence that the institution was divine; and perhaps the subject cannot be more fitly and aptly expressed than it has been by Mr. Gibbon, in the following words. "The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful. And thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord."

In reviewing the various systems of Polytheism which prevailed at that time, those which were cultivated by the Indians, the Persians, the Egyptians, and the Celts, are entitled to distinguished notice. Of these the Indians and Celts are chiefly remarkable for having selected for the object of their adoration a set of ancient heroes and leaders, whose memory, so far from being rendered illustrious by their virtues, had descended to posterity disgraced and loaded with vice and infamy. Both these classes of men believed that the souls of men survived the dissolution of their bodies: the former conceiving that all of them, without distinction, entered at death into other bodies on this earth; while the latter on the contrary, considering immortality to be the reward which heaven bestows on valor alone, supposed that the bodies of the brave, after being purified by fire, again became the receptacles of their souls, and that the heroes thus renewed were received into the council and society of the gods. Authority of the most despotic kind was committed to their priests by the people of either country. Their official duties were not restricted to the administration of the concerns of religion, but extended to the enacting of laws, and the various other departments of civil government.

In describing the religion of the Egyptians, we must distinguish between the general religion of the country, and the practice of particular provinces or districts. The liberty which every city and province enjoyed of adopting what deities it preferred, and of worshipping them under any forms which the inhabitants might think proper to institute, necessarily gave rise to a great variety of private systems. In the choice of their public or national gods, no sort of delicacy was manifested; the greater part of them being indiscriminately composed of mortals renowned in history for their virtues, and others distinguished alone by the enormity of their crimes: such were Osiris, Sera-



phis, Typhon, Isis, and others. With the worship of these, was joined that of the constellations, the sun, the moon, the dog-star, animals of almost every kind, certain sorts of plants, &c., &c. Whether the religion of the state, or that which was peculiar to any province or city be considered, it will be found equally remote in its principles from every thing liberal, dignified, or rational. Some parts were ridiculous in the extreme, and the whole in no small degree contaminated by a despicable baseness and obscenity. In fact, the religion of the Egyptians was so remarkably distinguished by absurd and disgraceful traits, that it was made the subject of derision even by those whose own tenets and practice were by no means conspicuous for wisdom. The Egyptian priests had a sacred code peculiarly their own, founded on principles very different from those which characterized the popular superstition, and which they studiously concealed from the prying eye of the public, by wrapping it up in hieroglyphical characters, the meaning and power of which were only known to themselves.

The Persians derived their religious system from Zoroaster. The leading principles of their religion were, that all things are derived from two common governing causes: the one the author of all good, the other of all evil: the former the source of light, of mind, and of spiritual intelligence; the latter that of darkness and matter, with all its grosser incidents. Between these two powerful agents they supposed a constant war to be carried on. Those, however, who taught upon this system, did not all explain it in the same way, or deduce the same conclusions from it: hence uniformity was destroyed, and various sects originated. The most intelligent part of the Persians maintained that there was one Supreme God, to whom they gave the name of *MYTHRA*, and that under him were two inferior deities, the one called *Oromasdes*, the author of all good; the other *Ariman*, the cause of all evil. The common people, who equally believed in the existence of a Supreme Being, under the title of *MYTHRA*, appear to have confounded him with the sun, which was the object of their adoration; and it is probable that with the two inferior deities they joined others of whom little or nothing is now known.

None of these various systems of religion appear to have contributed in any degree towards a reformation of manners, or exciting a respect for virtue of any kind. The gods and goddesses who were held up as objects of adoration to the multitude, instead of presenting examples of excellence for their imitation, stood forth to public view the avowed authors of the most flagrant and enormous crimes. The priests took no sort of interest in regulating the public morals, neither directing the peo-



ple by their precepts, nor inviting them by exhortation and example to the pursuit of what is lovely and of good report: on the contrary, they indulged themselves in the most unwarrantable licentiousness, maintaining that the whole of religion was comprised in performing the rites and ceremonies instituted by their ancestors, and that every species of sensual gratification was freely allowed by their deities to those who regularly ministered to them in this way. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and of a future state of rewards and punishments, was but little understood, and of course only very partially acknowledged. Hence at the period when Christ appeared, any notions of this kind found little or no acceptance among the Greeks and Romans, but were regarded in the light of old wives' fables, fit only for the amusement of women and children. No particular points of belief respecting the immortality of the soul being established by their public standards of religion, every one was at liberty to avow what opinion he pleased on that subject.

It can excite no reasonable surprise, therefore, that under the influence of such circumstances, the state of society should have become in the highest degree vicious and depraved. The lives of men of every class, from the highest to the lowest, were spent in the practice of the most abominable and flagitious vices. Even crimes, the horrible turpitude of which was such, that decency forbids the mention of them, were openly practised with the greatest impunity. Should the reader doubt of this, he may be referred to LUCIAN among the Greek authors, and to JUVENAL and PERSIUS among the Roman poets—or even to the testimony of the apostle Paul, in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. In the writings of Lucian, for instance he will find the most unnatural affections and detestable practices treated of at large, and with the utmost familiarity, as things of ordinary and daily occurrence. And when we turn our attention to those cruel and inhuman exhibitions which are well known to have yielded the highest gratification to both the Greeks and Romans, the two most polished nations of the world; the savage conflicts of the gladiators in the circus; when we cast an eye on the dissoluteness of manners by which the walks of private life were polluted; the horrible prostitution of boys, to which the laws opposed no restraint; the liberty of divorce which belonged to the wife as well as the husband; the shameful practice of exposing infants, and procuring abortions; the multiplicity of stews and brothels, many of which were consecrated to their deities;—when we reflect on these and various other excesses, to the most ample indulgence to which the laws opposed no restraint, who can forbear putting the question, that, if

such were the people distinguished above all others by the excellency of their laws, and the superiority of their attainments in literature and arts, what must have been the state of those nations who possessed none of these advantages, but were governed solely by the impulses and dictates of rude and uncultivated nature?

AT the time of Christ's appearance upon earth, there were two species of philosophy that generally prevailed throughout the civilized world, the one that of Greece; the other what is usually termed the Oriental. The philosophy of the Greeks was not confined to that nation, for its principles were embraced by all such of the Romans as aspired to any eminence of wisdom. The Oriental philosophy prevailed chiefly in Persia, Chaldea, Syria, Egypt, and other eastern countries. Both these species of philosophy were split into various sects, but with this distinction, that those which sprang from the Oriental system all proceeded on one common principle and of course had many similar tenets, though they might differ as to some particular inferences and opinions: whilst those to which the philosophy of Greece gave rise, were divided in opinion respecting the elements or first principles of wisdom, and were consequently widely separated from each other in the whole course of their discipline. The apostle Paul is generally supposed to have adverted to each of these systems—to that of Greece in Colloss.ii. 8 and to the Oriental in 1 Tim. i. 4. ch. iv. 7. and vi. 20.—in all which places he strongly warns Christians to beware of blending the doctrines of either with the simple Gospel of Jesus-Christ. Happy had it been for the Christian church, could they have taken the admonition which was thus given them by the apostle; but vain and presumptuous man could not rest satisfied with “the truth as it is in Jesus”—the wisdom that leads to eternal life, as it came pure from above, but must exercise his ingenuity in fruitless attempts to reconcile it, first of all with the principles of the Oriental philosophy, and afterwards to many of the dogmas of the Grecian sects.

The Greek philosophers, whose doctrines were also much cultivated by the Romans, may be divided into two classes: the first comprehended those whose tenets struck at the root of all religion—a species of *Atheists*, who while they professed to support and recommend the cause of virtue, in reality nourished the interests of vice, giving color to almost every kind of criminality: the other was composed of such as acknowledged the existence of a Deity, whom it was the duty of men to worship and obey, and who inculcated an essential and eternal distinction between good and evil, virtue and vice, but who nevertheless sub-



verted these just principles, by connecting with them various notions absurd or trifling in their nature.

The Oriental philosophy, as a peculiar system of doctrines concerning the divine nature, is said to have originated in Chaldea or Persia; from whence it passed through Syria, Asia Minor, and Egypt; and mixing with other systems, formed many different sects. There seems also to be sufficient ground for referring the formation of the leading doctrines of this philosophy into a regular system to Zoroaster whose name the followers of this doctrine prefixed to some of their spurious books, and whose system is fundamentally the same with that which was subsequently adopted by the Asiatic and Egyptian philosophers.

The mixture of Platonic notions which is found in the Asiatic philosophy, as well as of Oriental doctrines among the later Platonists, may be easily accounted for, from the intercourse which subsisted between the Alexandrian and Asiatic philosophers, after the schools of Alexandria were established. From that time, many Asiatics who were addicted to the study of philosophy, doubtless visited Alexandria, and became acquainted with the then popular doctrines of Plato; and by blending these with their own, formed a heterogeneous mass of opinions, which in its turn mixed with the systems of the Alexandrian schools. This union of Oriental and Grecian philosophy was further promoted by the dispersion of the Philosophers of Alexandria, in the reign of Ptolemy Physcon: many of whom, to escape from tyranny, fled into Asia, and opened schools in various places.

It is supposed to have been at the time when the Platonic philosophers of Alexandria visited the Eastern schools, that certain professors of the Oriental philosophy, prior to the existence of the Christian heresies, borrowed from the Greeks the name of Gnostics, to express their pretensions to a more perfect knowledge of the Divine Nature than others possessed. The Pagan origin of this appellation is supposed to be plainly intimated by the apostle Paul in two passages of his writings; in one of which he cautions Timothy against "the opposition of false science," 1. Tim. vi. 20. and in the other warns the Collossians not to be imposed upon by a "vain and deceitful philosophy," framed according to human tradition, and the principles of the world and not according to the doctrine of Christ.—Colloss. ii. 8. But whatever may be thought concerning the name, there is little room left to doubt, that the tenets, at least, of the Gnostics existed in the Eastern schools long before the rise of the Gnostic sects in the Christian church under Basilides, Valentine, and others; consequently must have been imported or derived by the latter from the former. The Oriental doctrine of Emanation



seems frequently alluded to in the New Testament, as hath been already observed, and in terms which cannot so properly be applied to any other dogmas of the Jewish sects.

The Oriental philosophers, though divided into a great variety of sects, seem to have been generally agreed in believing matter to be the cause of all evil, though they were much divided in opinion as to the particular mode or form under which it ought to be considered as such. They were unanimous in maintaining that there had existed from all eternity a divine nature, replete with goodness, intelligence, wisdom, and virtue, a light of the most pure and subtle kind diffused throughout all space, of whom it was impossible for the mind of man to form an adequate conception. Those who were conversant with the Greek language gave to this pre-eminent Being the name of *BUTHOS* in allusion to the vastness of his excellence, which they deemed it beyond the reach of human capacity to comprehend. The space which he inhabits they named *Pleroma*, but occasionally the term *Aion* or *Æon* was applied to it. This divine nature, they imagined, having existed for ages in solitude and silence, at length, by the operation of his own omnipotent will, begat of himself two minds or intelligences of a most excellent and exalted kind, one of either sex. By these, others of a similar nature were produced; and the faculty of propagating their kind being successively communicated to all, a class of divine beings was in time generated, respecting whom no difference of opinion seems to have existed, except in regard to their number; some conceiving it to be more and others less. The nearer any one of this celestial family stood in affinity to the one grand parent of all, the closer were they supposed to resemble him in nature and perfection; the farther they were removed, the less were they accounted to partake of his goodness, wisdom, or any other attribute. Although every one of them had a beginning, yet they were all supposed to be immortal, and not liable to any change.

Beyond that vast expanse refulgent with everlasting light, which was considered as the immediate habitation of the Deity, and of those natures which had been generated from him, these philosophers placed the seat of matter; where, according to them, it had lain from all eternity, a rude, undigested, opaque mass, agitated by turbulent irregular motions of its own provoking; and nurturing, as in a seed bed, the rudiments of vice and every species of evil. In this state it was found by a genius, or celestial spirit of the higher order, who had been either driven from the abode of Deity for some offence, or commissioned by

him for the purpose; and who reduced it into order, and gave it that arrangement and fashion which the universe now bears. Those who spake the Greek tongue were accustomed to refer to the Creator of the world by the name of DEMIURGUS. Matter received its inhabitants, both man and other animals, from the same hand that had given to it disposition and symmetry.

Its native darkness was also illuminated by this creative spirit with a ray of celestial light, either secretly stolen, or imparted through the bounty of the Deity. He likewise communicated to the bodies he had formed, and which would otherwise have remained destitute of reason and uninstructed, except in what relates to mere animal life, particles of the divine essence, or souls of a kindred nature to the Deity. When all things were thus completed, DEMIURGUS, revolting against the great First Cause of all things, the all-wise and omnipotent God assumed to himself the exclusive government of this new state, which he apportioned out into provinces or districts; bestowing the administration and command over them on a number of *genii* or spirits of inferior degree, who had been his associates and assistants.

Man, therefore, whilst he continued in this world, was supposed to be compounded of two principles, acting in direct opposition to each other;—an earthly, corrupt, or vitiated body—and a soul partaking of the nature of the Deity, being derived from the region of purity and light. The soul, or ethereal part, being through its connexion with the body, confined as it were within a prison of matter, was constantly exposed to the danger of becoming involved in ignorance, and acquiring every sort of evil propensity, from the impulse and contagion of the vitiated mass by which it was enveloped. But the Deity, touched with compassion for the hapless state of those captive minds, was ever anxious that the means of escaping from this darkness and bondage, into liberty and light, should be extended to them; and had, accordingly, at various times, sent amongst them teachers, endowed with wisdom and filled with celestial light, who might communicate to them the principles of true religion, and thus instruct them in the way by which deliverance was to be obtained from their wretched and forlorn state. DEMIURGUS, however, and his associates, unwilling to resign any part of that dominion, of whose sweets they were now become so sensible, or to relinquish the divine honors which they had usurped, set at work every engine to obstruct the Deity; and not only tormented and slew the messengers of heaven, but endeavored, by means of superstition and sensual attractions, to root out and extinguish every spark of celestial truth. The minds that listened to the calls of the Deity, and who having renounced



obedience to the usurped authorities of this world, continued steadfast in the worship of the great First Parent, resisting the evil propensities of the corporeal frame, and every incitement to illicit gratification, were supposed, on the dissolution of their bodies, to be directly borne away, pure, aerial, and disengaged from every thing gross or material, to the immediate residence of God himself; whilst those who, notwithstanding the admonitions they received, had persisted in paying divine honors to him who was merely the fabricator of the world, and his associates, worshipping them as gods, and suffering themselves to be enslaved by the lusts and vicious impulses to which they were exposed from their alliance with matter, were denied the hope of exaltation after death, and could only expect to migrate into new bodies, suited to their base, sluggish, and degraded condition. When the grand work of setting free all these minds or souls should be accomplished, God, it was supposed, would dissolve the fabric of this lower world; and having once more confined matter, with all its contagious influence, within its original limits, would throughout all future ages live in consummate glory, and reign surrounded by kindred spirits as he did before the foundation of the world.

From this concise review of the state of the Gentile world at the time of Christ's appearance on earth, the inferences to be deduced, are, it is presumed, sufficiently obvious. Mankind had been furnished with abundant experience of what reason and philosophy, in their highest state of cultivation, could do, in the way of directing the human mind to the attainment of virtue and happiness; and what was the result? The very wisest among them were bewildered in fruitless speculation about the nature of the **CHIEF GOOD**, and equally so about the way of attaining it. Some of them, indeed, admitted that it consisted in virtue; but then if we inquire wherein they supposed virtue to consist, we shall find their notions as discordant and undefined as their ideas of happiness itself were vague and desultory. **ARISTOTLE** made the existence of happiness to depend upon the possession of an abundance of the good things of this world; and even laid it down as a principle, that "without the gifts of fortune, virtue is not sufficient for happiness, but that a wise man must be miserable in poverty and sickness." **DIOGENES**, from whose pride and stoical austerity one might have expected sentiments of a different nature, maintained that a poor old man was the most miserable thing in life. Even **PLATO**, the great preceptor of Aristotle, taught his followers that happiness comprehended the possession of wisdom, health, good fortune, honor, and riches; and maintained that the man who enjoyed *all these* must be perfectly happy. **ZENO** and his followers held it



as a principle, that all crimes were equal. THALES, the founder of the Ionian sect, being asked how he thought a man might bear affliction with the greatest ease, answered, "By seeing his enemies in a worse condition." EPICURUS had no notion of justice but as it was profitable and the consequence was, that the morals of his followers were proverbially scandalous; for though their master taught that happiness consisted in virtue, he made virtue itself to consist in following nature, and thus he eventually led his disciples into such gross immorality, that according to their manner of life, virtue and voluptuousness seemed to be convertible terms with them: and ever since, an Epicure is a title appropriate to every character in which excess and sensual indulgence are found to meet.

Such was the hopeless and forlorn condition into which the human race had sunk, and such the wretched aspect of the heathen or Gentile world, at the time of the Messiah's appearance upon earth. The Greeks and Romans had civilized the world; philosophy had done its utmost; literature and arts, and the sciences in every department, had been cultivated to the highest perfection; but what under all these advantages, was the real condition of our species in reference to man's highest end and aim the knowledge of the true God and the duties which he owes him—the actual state of religion and morals? We have strikingly described by the great apostles of the Gentiles. "They walked in the vanity of their mind; having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart: and being past feeling, they had given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness:—they were without hope, and without God in the world."—Eph. ii. 12. and ch. iv. 17, 18.

The privileges which the Jews at this time enjoyed above all other nations, were many and distinguished; but in enumerating them, the apostle Paul lays the principal stress upon their being favored with a divine revelation, to guide them in matters of the highest importance to their present and everlasting happiness:—they had the oracles of God in their hands; the writings of Moses and the Prophets, those holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Yet with these incalculable advantages, the condition of the people in general was not much superior to that of the Gentiles.

The civil government of Judea, at the time of Christ's birth, was vested in the hands of a Roman stipendiary, named Herod the Great;—a title to which he could have no pretensions, except from the magnitude of his vices. Nature, it is true, had not withheld from him the talents requisite for a lofty and brill-

iant course of life; but such was his jealous disposition, such the ferocity of his temper, his devotedness to luxury, pomp, and magnificence so madly extravagant, and so much beyond his means; in short, so extensive and enormous was the catalogue of his vices, that he became an object of utter detestation to the afflicted people over whom he swayed the kingly sceptre. Instead of cherishing and protecting his subjects, he appears to have made them sensible of his authority merely by oppression and violence; so that they complained to the Emperor Augustus, at Rome, of his cruelties, declaring that they had suffered as much as if a wild beast had reigned over them; and Eusebius affirms that the cruelty of this nefarious despot far surpassed whatever had been represented in tragedy! Herod was not ignorant of the hatred which he had drawn upon himself, but to soften its asperity he became a professed devotee to the Jewish religion, and at a vast expense restored their Temple, which through age had fallen into decay; but the effect of all this was destroyed by his still conforming to the manners and habits of those who worshipped a plurality of gods; and so many things were countenanced in direct opposition to the Jewish religion, that the hypocrisy of the tyrant's professions were too manifest to admit of a doubt.

On the death of Herod, the government of Judea was divided by the Emperor Augustus amongst his three surviving sons. Archelaus, the elder of the three, was appointed governor of Judea, Idumea, and Samaria, under the title of Ethnarch. Antipas presided over Galilee and Perea; whilst Batanea, Trachonitis, Auranitis, with some of the neighboring territory, were assigned to Philip. The two latter, from their having a *fourth* part of the province of Judea allotted to each, were styled Tetrarchs. Archelaus, who inherited all the vices of his father, with but few of his better qualities, completely exhausted the patience of the Jews; and by a series of the most injurious and oppressive acts, drove them, in the tenth year of his reign, to lay their complaints before the Emperor Augustus, who, after investigating the merits of the case, deposed the Ethnarch, and banished him to Vienne in Gaul.

On the expulsion of Archelaus, the greater part of Palestine, or Judea, was reduced by the Roman government into the form of a province, and placed under the superintendence of a governor, who was subject to the control of the president of Syria. It is probable that this arrangement at first met with the ready concurrence of the Jews, who, on the death of Herod, had petitioned Augustus that the distinct regal government might no longer be continued to them, but that their country might be re-



ceived under his own immediate protection, and treated as a part of the Roman Empire. The change, however, instead of producing an alleviation of misery to this unhappy people, brought with it an intolerable increase of their calamities. For independent of the avarice and injustice of the governors, to which there were no bounds, it proved an intolerable grievance to them, who considered their nation to be God's peculiar people, that they should be obliged to pay tribute to a Heathen, and an enemy of the true God, like Caesar, and live in subjection to those who worshipped false deities. Add to which, that the extortion of the Publicans, who after the Roman manner were intrusted with the collection of the revenue, and for whose continual and flagrant abuses of authority it was seldom possible to obtain any sort of redress, became a subject of infinite dissatisfaction and complaint. And, to crown the whole, the constant presence of their governors, surrounded as they were by a multitude of foreign attendants, of all descriptions, and protected by a Roman military guard, quartered with their Eagles and various other ensigns of superstition, in the center of Jerusalem, their wholly city, kept the sensibility of the Jews continually on the rack, and excited in their minds a degree of indignation bordering on fury. They naturally considered their religion to be disgraced and insulted by these innovations—their holy places defiled—and in fact themselves, with all that they held sacred, polluted and brought into contempt. To these causes, are to be attributed the frequent tumults, factions, seditions, and murders, by which it is well known that these unfortunate people accelerated their own destruction.

If any vestige of liberty or happiness could have been possessed by a people thus circumstanced, it was effectually cut off by those who held the second place in the civil government under the Romans, and the sons of Herod, and who also had the supreme direction in every thing pertaining to religion, namely, the chief priests and the seventy elders, of whom the Sanhedrim or national council was composed. Josephus tells us, that the High Priests were the most abandoned of mortals, and that they generally obtained their dignified stations either through the influence of money, or court sycophancy; and that they shrank from no species of criminality that might contribute to support them in the possession of an authority thus iniquitously purchased. Under a full conviction of the precarious tenure on which they held their situation, it became a leading object of their concern, to accumulate, either by fraud or force, such a quantity of wealth, as might enable them to gain the rulers of the state over to their interest, and drive away all competitors,

or else yield them, when deprived of their dignity, the means of living at their ease in retirement.

The Sanhedrim, or national council, being composed of men who differed in opinion respecting some of the most important points of religion, nothing like a general harmony was to be found amongst its members: on the contrary, having adopted the principles of various sects, they allowed themselves to be carried away by all the prejudice and animosity of party; and were too often more intent on the indulgence of private pique, than studious of advancing the cause of religion, or promoting the public welfare. A similar depravity prevailed among the ordinary priests, and the inferior ministers of religion. The common people, instigated by the shocking examples thus held out to them, by those whom they were taught to consider as their guides, precipitated themselves into every species of vicious excess; and giving themselves up to sedition and rapine, appeared alike to defy the vengeance both of God and man.

There were, at that time, two prevailing systems of religion in Palestine, the Jewish and the Samaritan; and what contributed not a little to the calamities of the Hebrew nation, the followers of each of these regarded those of the other persuasion with the most virulent and implacable hatred, mutually venting their rancorous animosity in the direst curses and imprecations. The nature of the Jewish religion may be collected from the books of the Old Testament; but at the time of Christ's appearance, it had lost much of its original beauty and excellence, and was corrupted by errors of the most flagrant kind, that had crept in from various sources. The public worship of God was indeed still continued in the temple of Jerusalem, with all the rites of the Mosaic institution; and their festivals never failed to draw together an immense concourse of people at the stated seasons: nor did the Romans ever interfere to prevent those observances. In domestic life also, the ordinances of the Law were in general punctually attended to; but it is manifest from the evidence adduced by various learned men, that even in the service of the Temple itself, numerous ceremonies and observances, drawn from the religious worship of heathen nations, had been introduced and blended with those of divine institution; and that, in addition to superstitions\* like these of a public nature, many erroneous principles, probably brought from Babylon and Chaldea, by the ancestors of the people at their return from captivity, or adopted by the inconsiderate multitude, in conformity to the example of their neighbors the Greeks the Syrians, and the Egyptians, were cherished and acted on in private.

The opinions and sentiments of the Jews respecting the Dei-



ty, the divine nature, the angels, the daemons, the souls of men, their duties, and similar subjects, appear to have been far less extravagant, and formed on more rational grounds, than those of any other nation or people. Indeed, it was scarcely possible that they should wholly lose sight of that truth, in the knowledge of which their fathers had been instructed through the medium of revelation; especially as this instruction was rendered habitual to them, even at a tender age, by hearing, reading, and studying the writings of Moses and the prophets. In all their cities, towns and villages, and indeed throughout the Empire, wherever any considerable number of Jews resided, a sacred edifice, which they called a synagogue, was erected, in which it was customary for the people regularly to assemble, for the purpose of prayer and praise, and hearing the law publicly read and expounded. In most of the larger towns, there were also schools established, in which young persons were initiated in the first principles of religion, as well as instructed in the liberal arts.

But though the Jews certainly entertained many sentiments more rational and correct than their neighbors—sentiments which they had adopted from their own scriptures—yet they had gradually incorporated with them so large a mixture of what was fabulous and absurd, as nearly to deprive the truth of all its force and energy. Hence the many pointed rebukes which Jesus Christ gave to the Scribes and Pharisees, the prime leaders of religion in his day; telling them that they taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and that they had made the divine law void through their traditions. Their notions of the nature of God, are supposed to have been closely allied to the Oriental philosophy on that subject, while to the prince of darkness, and his associates and agents, they attributed an influence over the world and the human race so predominant as scarcely to leave a superior degree of power even to the Deity himself. Of various terrific conceits, founded upon this notion, one of the principal was, that all the evils and calamities which befel the human race, were to be considered as originating with this prince of darkness and his ministering spirits, who had their dwelling in the air, and were scattered throughout every part of the universe. Their notions also, and manner of reasoning respecting angels, or ministers of divine providence, were nearly allied to those maintained by the Babylonians or Chaldeans.

But on no one point were the sentiments of the Jews of that day more estranged from the doctrine that was taught by their prophets, than on that which regarded the character of their Messiah. The greatest part of the Jewish nation were looking

with eager desire for the appearance of the deliver whom God had promised to their fathers. But their hopes were not directed to such an one as the scriptures described: they expected not a spiritual deliverer, to rescue them from the bondage of sin and Satan, and to bestow upon them the blessings of salvation, the forgiveness of sins, peace with God, the adoption of children into his family, and the hope of an eternal inheritance in the world to come; they looked for a mighty warlike leader, whose talents and prowess might recover for them their civil liberty. Fondly dreaming of a temporal kingdom for their Messiah, their carnal minds were so riveted under the dominion of this master prejudice, that, in general, their hearts were blinded to the real scope of the law and the prophets.

It is abundantly manifest from the New Testament scriptures, that at the time of Christ's appearance, the Jews were divided into various sects widely differing in opinion from each other, not merely on subjects of smaller moment, but also on those points which enter into the very essence of religion. Of the Pharisees and Sadducees, the two most distinguished of these sects, both in number and respectability, mention is made in the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles. Josephus, Philo, and others, speak of a third sect, under the title of the Essenes; and it appears from more than one authority, that several others of less note were to be found among them. The evangelist Matthew notices the Herodians; a class of men who, it seems highly probable, had espoused the cause of the descendants of Herod the Great, and contended that they had been unjustly deprived of the greater part of Palestine by the Romans. Josephus makes mention also of another sect, bearing the title of Philosophers; composed of men of the most ferocious character, and founded by Judas, a Galilean—a strenuous and undaunted asserter of the liberties of the Jewish nation, who maintained that the Hebrews, the favorite people of heaven, ought to render obedience to God alone, and consequently were continually stimulating one another to throw off the Roman yoke and assert their national independence.

The Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes, the three most powerful of the Jewish sects, were cordially united in sentiment respecting all those fundamental points which constituted the basis of the Jewish religion. All of them, for instance, rejected with detestation the notion of a plurality of gods, and would acknowledge the existence of but one Almighty Power, whom they regarded as the Creator of the universe, and believed to be endowed with the most absolute perfection and goodness. They were equally agreed in the opinion, that God



had selected the Hebrews from amongst all the other nations of the earth as his peculiar people, and had bound them to himself by an unchangeable and everlasting covenant. With the same unanimity, they maintained the divine mission of Moses; that he was the ambassador of heaven, and consequently that the law delivered at Mount Sinai, and promulgated by his ministry, was of divine original. It was also the general belief among them, that in the books of the Old Testament were contained ample instructions respecting the way of salvation and eternal happiness; and that whatever principles or duties were inculcated in those writings, must be reverently received and implicitly obeyed. But an almost irreconcilable difference of opinion, and the most vehement disputes, prevailed among them, respecting the original source or fountain from whence all religion was to be deduced. Both the Sadducees and Essenes rejected with disdain the oral law, to which the Pharisees, however paid the greatest deference. And the interpretation of the written law, yielded still further ground for acrimonious contention. The Pharisees maintained that the law as committed to writing by Moses, and likewise every other part of the sacred volume, had a twofold sense or meaning; the one plain and obvious to every reader, the other abstruse and mystical. The Sadducees, on the contrary, would admit of nothing beyond a simple interpretation of the words, according to their strict literal sense. The Essenes, or at least the greater part of them, differing from both of these, considered the words of the law to possess no force or power whatever in themselves, but merely to exhibit the shadows or images of celestial objects, of virtues, and of duties. So much dissension and discord respecting the rule of religion, and the sense in which the divine law ought to be understood, could not fail to produce a great diversity in the forms of religious worship, and naturally tended to generate the most opposite and conflicting sentiments on subjects of a divine nature.

The PHARISEES, in point of number, riches, authority, and influence, took precedence of all the Jewish sects. And as they constantly manifested an extraordinary display of religion, in an apparent zeal for the cultivation of piety and brotherly love, and by an affectation of superior sanctity in their opinions, manners, and dress, the influence which they possessed over the minds of the people was unbounded; insomuch that they may be almost said to have given whatever direction they pleased to public affairs. It is unquestionable, however, that the religion of the Pharisees was, for the most part, founded in consummate hypocrisy; and that in reality, they were generally the slaves of every vicious appetite; proud, arrogant, and avaracious, consulting only the gratification of their lusts, even at the moment of

their professing themselves to be engaged in the service of their Maker. These odious features in the character of the Pharisees, drew upon them the most pointed rebukes from our Lord and Saviour; with more severity indeed than he bestowed on the Sadducees, who although they had departed widely from the genuine principles of religion, yet did not impose upon mankind by a pretended sanctity, or devote themselves with insatiable greediness to the acquisition of honors and riches. The Pharisees admitted the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and of a future state of rewards and punishments. They admitted, to a certain extent, the free agency of man; but beyond that, they supposed his actions to be controlled by the decrees of fate. These points of doctrine, however, seem not to have been understood or explained by all the sect in the same way, neither does it appear that any great pains were taken to define and ascertain them with accuracy and precision, or to support them by reasoning and argument.

The **SADDUCEES**, if we may credit the testimony of Josephus concerning them, were a sect much inferior in point of number to that of the Pharisees, but composed entirely of persons distinguished for their opulence and prosperity. He also represents those who belonged to it, as wholly devoid of the sentiments of benevolence and compassion towards others; whereas the Pharisees, according to him, were ever ready to relieve the wants of the indigent and afflicted. He further describes them as fond of passing their lives in one uninterrupted course of ease and pleasure; insomuch that it was with difficulty they could be prevailed on to undertake the duties of the magistracy, or any other public function. Their leading tenet was, that all our hopes and fears terminate with the present life; the soul being involved in one common fate with the body, and, like it, liable to perish and be annihilated. Upon this principle, it was very natural for them to maintain, that obedience to the divine law would be rewarded by the Most High with length of days, and an abundance of the good things of this life, such as honors, distinction and riches; whilst the violators of it would, in like manner find their punishment in the temporary sufferings and afflictions of the present time. The Sadducees, therefore, always connected the favor of heaven with a state of worldly prosperity, and could not regard any as virtuous, or the friends of heaven, but the fortunate and happy: they had no bowels of compassion for the poor and the miserable; their desires and hopes centered in a life of leisure, ease and voluptuous gratification—for such is precisely the character which Josephus gives us of them.

The **ESSENES**, though not particularly mentioned by the writers of the New Testament, existed as a sect in the days of our



Lord, and are frequently spoken of by Josephus, who divides them into two branches; the one characterized by a life of celibacy, dedicated to the instruction and education of the children of others; whilst the other thought it proper to marry, not so much with a view to sensual gratification, as for the purpose of propagating the human species. Hence they have been distinguished by some writers into the practical and the theoretical Essenes.

The practical Essenes were distributed in the cities and throughout the countries of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. Their bond of association embraced not merely a community of tenets, and a similarity of manners and particular observances, like that of the Pharisees or the Sadducees, but it extended also to an intercommunity of goods. Their demeanor was sober and chaste; and their mode of life was, in every other respect, subjected to the strictest regulations, and submitted to the superintendence of governors, whom they appointed over themselves. The whole of their time was devoted to labor, meditation and prayer; and they were most sedulously attentive to the calls of justice and humanity, and every moral duty. In common with the wrost of the Jews, they believed in the unity of God; but from some of their institutes, it appears that they entertained a reverence for the sun; probably, considering that grand luminary as a deity of an inferior order, or perhaps regarding him as the visible image of the Supreme Being. They supposed the souls of men to have fallen, by a disastrous fate, from the regions of purity and light, into the bodies which they occupy; during their continuance in which they considered them to be confined, as it were, within the walls of a loathsome dungeon. For this reason, therefore, they did not believe in the resurrection of the body; although it was their opinion that the soul would be rewarded or punished in a future state, according to its deserts. They cultivated great abstinence, allowing themselves but little bodily nourishment or gratification, from an apprehension that the immortal spirit might be thereby encumbered and weighed down. It was their endeavor, too, by constant meditation, to withdraw the mind as much as possible from the contagious influence of the corrupt mass by which it was unhappily enveloped. The ceremonies, or external forms, which were enjoined in the law of Moses to be observed in the worship of God, were totally disregarded by many of the Essenes; it being their opinion that the words of Moses were to be understood in a mysterious and recondite sense, and not according to their literal meaning. Others of them, indeed, so far conformed as to offer sacrifices; but they did this at home: for they were wholly averse to the rites which it was necessary for those to observe who at-

tended the Temple worship. Upon the whole it does not seem an improbable conjecture, that the doctrine and discipline of the Essenes arose out of an illjudged attempt to make the principles of the Jewish religion accord with some tenets which they fondly imbibed from the oriental philosophy of which we have already treated.

As to the moral doctrine of these sects of the Essenes, as well as that of the Pharisees and Sadducees, into which the Jewish people were divided, it cannot be considered as having in any degree contributed towards promoting the interests of virtue and genuine piety. The Pharisees, as was frequently objected to them by Christ, who knew their hearts, were destitute of the love of God and their neighbor, the essential principles of righteousness—they were hypocritical in their acts of worship—proud and self-righteous—harsh and uncharitable in their judgment of others—while they made the divine law void through their traditions. They paid little or no regard to inward purity or sanctity of mind, but studied by all possible means to attract the eyes of the multitude towards them, by an ostentatious solemnity of carriage, and the most specious external parade of piety and brotherly love. They were continually straining and perverting the most important precepts of the divine law; whilst at the same time, they enforced an unreserved obedience to ordinances which were of mere human institution. The Sadducees regarded all those persons as righteous, who strictly conformed themselves to the ritual observances prescribed in the law of Moses, and that did no injury to any of the Jewish nation, from whom they had received none. And as their principles forbade men to look forward to a future state of rewards and punishments, and placed the whole happiness of man in the possession of riches and in sensual gratification, they naturally tended to generate and encourage an inordinate love of money, a brutal insensibility to the calls of compassion, and a variety of other vices equally pernicious and degrading to the human mind. The Essenes laboured under the influence of a depressing superstition, so that, whilst they were scrupulously attentive to the demands of justice and equity in regard to others, they appear to have altogether overlooked the duties which men owe to themselves. Those of them who were distinguished by the name of Therapeutae, or theoretical Essenes, were a race of men who resigned themselves entirely to the dictates of the most egregious fanaticism and folly. They would engage in no sort of business or employment on their own account; nor would they be instrumental in forwarding the interest of others. In short, they appear to have considered themselves as released from every bond by which human society is held together, and at liberty to



act in direct opposition to almost every principle of moral discipline.

It cannot therefore excite any reasonable surprise that, owing to the various causes which we have thus enumerated, the great mass of the Jewish people were, at the period of the birth of Jesus Christ, sunk in the most profound ignorance as to divine things; and the nation, for the most part, devoted to a flagitious and dissolute course of life. That such was the miserable state of degradation into which this highly privileged people had fallen, is incontestably proved by the history of our Lord's life, and the tenor of his discourses and conversations which he condescended to address to them. Hence his comparison of the teachers among them to blind guides, who professed to instruct others in a way with which they were totally unacquainted themselves; and the multitude to a flock of lost sheep, wandering without a shepherd. Mat. xv. 14. John, ix. 39. Mat. x. 6. ch. xv. 24.

In addition to what has been already said respecting the sources of error and corruption among the Jews, we have still further to remark, that, at the time of Christ's appearance, numbers among them had imbibed the principles of the Oriental philosophy respecting the origin of the world, and were much addicted to the study of a mystical sort of learning to which they gave the name of *Cabballa*.

The SAMARITANS are spoken of in the New Testament as a sect altogether distinct from the Jews; and as they were inhabitants of Palestine, they merit attention in this place. Their sacred rites were performed in a Temple erected on Mount Gerizim; they were involved in the same calamities which befel the Jewish people, and were no less forward than the Jews in adding to their other afflictions, the numerous evils produced by factions and intestine tumults. They were not, however, divided into so many religious sects; although the instances of Dositheus, Menander, and Simon Magus, plainly prove that there were not wanting among them some who were carried away by the love of paradox and a fondness for novel speculations; and that they debased the religion of their ancestors, by incorporating with it many of the principles of the Oriental philosophy. Much has been handed down to us by Jewish authors respecting the religious sentiments of the Samaritans, on which however we cannot place reliance, as it was unquestionably dictated by a spirit of invidious malignity. It is certain however, that our Lord attributes to the Samaritans a great degree of ignorance respecting God and divine things; it cannot therefore be doubted, that in their religious system the truth was much debased by superstition and the light in no small degree obscured by the mists of er-

ror. They acknowledged none of the writings of the Old Testament as sacred, or of divine authority, but the five books of Moses only. We learn, nevertheless, from the conversation of the woman with our Lord at the well of Samaria, John iv. 25. that the Samaritans confidently expected the Messiah, and that they looked forward to him in the light of a spiritual teacher and guide, who should instruct them in a more perfect and acceptable way of worshipping the Most High than that which they then followed. Whether they were carried away with the fond conceit of his being a warlike leader, a hero, an emperor, who should recover for the oppressed posterity of Abraham their liberty and rights, and to the same extent that the Jews were, it would not be easy to determine. In this one thing, at least, they appear to have shown themselves superior to the Jews in general, that they did not attempt to gloss over or conceal the many imperfections of their religion, but frankly acknowledged its defects, and looked forward with hope to the period when the Messiah should reform what was amiss, and communicate to them a larger measure of spiritual instruction, of which they stood so much in need.

So exceedingly great was the fecundity of the Jewish people, that multitudes of them, from time, were constrained to emigrate from their native country; and at the era of Christ's birth, the descendants of Abraham were to be met with in every part of the known world. In all the provinces of the Roman Empire, in particular, they were to be found in great numbers, either serving in the army, or engaged in the pursuits of commerce, or practising some lucrative art. Of the truth of this we have evidence in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where we learn that on the day of Pentecost, there were assembled at Jerusalem, Jews, "out of every nation under heaven," who had come up to attend the festival. Their dispersion over all the west, was the consequence of the subjugation of Judea to Rome, and it was an important link in the chain of divine providence; for it placed them, as they express it, "witnesses of the unity of God in all the nations of the world," and this at a time when idolatry and vice overwhelmed all the rest of mankind. Those of them who thus ventured to establish themselves without the confines of Palestine, were every where successful in obtaining that general sort of encouragement and protection from violence, which was to be derived from various regulations, and edicts of the emperors and magistrates in their favor: but the peculiarities of their religion and manners caused them to be held in very general contempt, and not unfrequently exposed them to much vexation and annoyance from the jealousy and indignation of a superstitious populace. Many of them, in



consequence of their long residence and intercourse among foreign nations, fell into the error of attempting to accommodate their religious profession to the principles and institutions of some of the different systems of heathen discipline, of which it would be easy to adduce numerous instances. On the other hand, however, it should not be overlooked, that the Jews were often successful in proselyting to their faith many of those among whom they sojourned, giving them to perceive the superiority of the Mosaic religion to the Gentile superstition, and were highly instrumental in causing them to forsake the worship of a plurality of gods.

## CHAPTER II.

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### THE FIRST CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—DOCTRINE, GOVERNMENT, AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH.—OF THE SECTS WHICH EXISTED IN THE FIRST CENTURY.—OF LEARNED MEN IN THE FIRST CENTURY.

To those, who, in the writings of the inspired penman, have had an opportunity of contemplating the life, actions, death, and resurrection of the Redeemer of the world, all accounts of the circumstances attending his abode upon earth must appear superfluous and unnecessary. The pen of inspiration can alone do justice to a character which it could never enter into the human heart to conceive. By that, every circumstance which it was necessary we should be acquainted with, relative to the Saviour of men, is distinctly revealed. He is there exhibited descending upon earth, taking on him the form of a man, by every action of his life affording the most pure and spotless example, and living and dying for the salvation of men, in language so simple, yet so forcible, as to defy imitation. Truth, not ornament was the object pursued by the first writers of the life and doctrines of Christ; and every circumstance attending the narration attests their veracity. Their works supersede the necessity of any accounts of their Divine Master. The writer of ecclesiastical history, therefore more properly commences his work by relating the circumstances posterior to the death of Christ than those which attended his life.

Unaided by those external circumstances which give splendor and dignity to opinions hitherto unreceived or unknown, the establishment of Christianity can only be primarily ascribed to the intervention of an over-ruling Providence, and to the forcible and satisfactory nature of that evidence which proves the authenticity of the Christian revelation. The pure doctrines of the Gospel were at first propagated by men who were indigent, illiterate, and selected from the lowest classes of mankind. As the constant companions of their divine master, they were, in-



deed, indubitable witnesses of the virtue of his life, of the purity of his doctrines, and of the stupendous miracles which he wrought, But they were utterly incapable of decorating their accounts with studied diction, of enforcing them by the authority of superior rank, or of enriching them with the treasures of human learning and eloquence. This system, so pure, so perfect, so opposite to the corruption and depravity which at the time of Christ's appearance upon earth universally prevailed, addressed itself not to the passions, but to the understandings of mankind; and the simple majesty of reason and of truth triumphed over all the opposition of prejudice and error.

The first professors of Christianity, who were favored with the opportunities of observing those astonishing powers which demonstrated the great and supernal nature of their divine master must have seen with peculiar delight, that in him were united and centred all those miraculous and apparently irreconcilable circumstances, which were predicted by the prophets of the Messiah. Witnesses of his profound knowledge of the human mind, of the accomplishment of his promise to support those who were called to suffer in the cause of truth, and of the fulfilment of his predictions of events utterly improbable, and far beyond the reach of human conjecture: their reason must have been convinced, and their faith confirmed. These arguments, together with the example of a life devoted by their master to the interests of religion and virtue; of his death, endured in confirmation of the holy doctrines he had taught; of his ascension to heaven in the presence of numbers, many of whom would neither have deceived others, nor were likely to be deluded themselves; were a few of the evidences in support of the Christian revelation, before which the scepticism of many retired with a blush.

The multitude which continually followed Jesus, and the proselytes in distant quarters, who were, probably converted by the preaching of the seventy disciples first commissioned to teach the doctrines of Christ, afford us reason to believe, that before the striking events of his resurrection and ascension, very many had already embraced the truths of the Gospel. But Christianity received the most powerful accessions from the gift of the Holy Spirit; which at a very early period after the ascension of Christ, was conferred upon the Apostles, and empowered them to fulfil the high commission of promulgating eternal peace and happiness to the whole human race. Their ability to address their exhortations to every nation in its own language; their performance of the most surprising miracles; their power to confer miraculous gifts upon others; their irreproachable manners; their benevolent actions, and the purity of their

doctrines, gained prodigious accessions to the Christian cause. A considerable body of the Jewish people humbly acknowledged Christ as the Messiah sent from God; and the truths of the Gospel were extended by the Apostles throughout the Roman empire.

In addition to the accounts furnished by Scripture, tradition has supplied several circumstances relative to the Apostles, and the nations to whom they preached;\* but traditional records are imperfect, obscure, and most commonly false. The joint testimony of sacred and profane writers informs us of little more concerning these illustrious martyrs to the truth, than that, after a succession of dangers, difficulties, and distresses, many of them closed a laborious life by a painful and ignominious death. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, was beheaded at Rome in the reign of Nero; and Peter is generally supposed to have been crucified at the same place, and during the same reign. The Evangelist John was banished, in the persecution by Domitian, to the Isle of Patmos, in the year 91. On the cessation of the persecution however, he returned to Ephesus, and visited the churches in that province. Though he was too old to preach, yet he was a constant attendant on public worship; and frequently exhorted the people with this parental exclamation—"My little children love one another." He died and was interred at Ephesus.

Of the other Apostles and Evangelists still less, if possible, is with certainty known. James, the brother of our Lord, who for his eminent virtue acquired the sur-name of the Just, continued to exercise his ministry at Jerusalem after the departure of Saint Paul. On the death of Festus, a kind of interregnum succeeded in the government of Judea, before the arrival of his successor Albinus; and the Jews who were full of resentment at the escape of Saint Paul, seized the opportunity to imbrue their hands in the blood of this pious and excellent person. He was sentenced by the council to be stoned as a blasphemer; and after praying for his enemies, being thrown from some part of the temple, he was at length released from his sufferings by a blow from a fuller's pole. Josephus adds, that Albinus on his arrival was so disgusted by this violent proceeding, that he wrote to the high priest, and threatened to punish him for it.

Many stories are related of some other of the Apostles.—

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\*There are few Christian nations in Europe which have not claimed the honor of embracing Christianity in the Apostolic age. Among the rest, Britain, upon the authority of an obscure passage in Theodoret, has asserted her pretensions to the glory of having been converted by St. Paul.



Philip, who resided chiefly in Hieropolis, is said to have raised a person from the dead in that city. Justus, who was sur-named Barsabus, is reported to have drank poison without receiving any injury from it. Bartholomew is believed by Eusebius to have preached in India; Thomas in Parthia, and Andrew in Scythia. Of the Apostle Jude scarcely anything is even pretended to be known.

During the time in which Paul was confined at Rome he composed his Epistles to his brethren, and to the principal churches. The Gospel of Matthew was written for the use of his Hebrew brethren to whom he had preached, when he was about to depart from them, and is generally believed to have been composed in the Hebrew tongue, and afterwards translated into Greek. The Gospel of Mark (who was the friend and companion of Paul) has been thought by some to be only an epitome of that of Matthew. Luke, who is said to have been a physician at Antioch, as well as Mark and John is supposed to have been one of the seventy disciples, and who accompanied Paul in his ministrations, composed the Gospel which bears his name and the Acts of the Apostles. These three Gospels were succeeded by that of the Evangelist John, who approved of them; but perceiving that their accounts were posterior to the imprisonment of John the Baptist, thought it expedient to give to the church some records of the actions and doctrines of his beloved master in the beginning of his ministry. Besides this, John is allowed to have composed at least one epistle, if not more; but the two latter ones, and the book of the Revelations, have excited some controversy concerning their author. These works were quickly dispersed among the Christian believers, and were collected and read in their religious assemblies for the confirmation and edification of the faithful. Indeed such a collection, stamped with Apostolical authority, soon became necessary, in order to separate the inspired writings from a number of fraudulent and absurd performances, which were circulated as the productions of the Apostles.

Besides the assistance which was derived to Christianity from the actions, precepts, and zeal of its first teachers, the virtues of the primitive Christians afforded a powerful support to the doctrines they professed, and formed a striking contrast to the depravity and corruption which almost universally prevailed.—Nor were the opposition and persecution they met with prejudicial to their cause. They only served to unite more firmly this small, but intrepid band, well convinced of the importance of those truths for which they contended; and to attract the notice and compassion of all mankind towards a sect distinguished only for its singularity and virtue. Their implacable enemies the

Jews, who saw their own lofty claims to superiority, and their profligate conduct, directly attacked and censured, both by the tenets and manners of the teachers of Christianity, assaulted them every where with unrelenting fury. Their rancor and animosity, however, towards the Christians, only rendered the accomplishment of those terrible predictions which had been denounced against them by Jesus Christ more apparent and remarkable; and, by these means, rather accelerated than retarded the progress of Christianity. Many of the previous signs and portends which had been foretold concerning the demolition of the temple, had already taken place, and were such as might have instructed a people less obstinate and perverse; that their destruction was at hand, and might have rendered them cautious of any action which could provoke their enemies against them. Great indeed were the oppressions which they experienced from a corrupt government and provoked to fury by its rapacity and violence, in the year 66 they commenced hostilities against the Romans, and the flames of war raged throughout Asia to Egypt and the East. Under the reign of Vespasian, Jerusalem was besieged for six months by Titus; during which time every calamity that can accompany that most afflictive of the divine visitations, war, was endured by the miserable inhabitants. The city and temple were at length taken by storm; the conqueror would have saved the body of the temple, but a soldier set fire to an adjoining building, and the whole was unfortunately consumed. Eleven hundred thousand of the Jewish people are said to have perished in the siege and in the sack of the city; many by famine, and many in the flames and by the sword. Ninety-seven thousand were exposed to sale as slaves; with which the market was at length so glutted, that no purchasers could be found. Besides these, multitudes were thrown to wild beasts, or sacrificed as gladiators, in the savage sports of the Romans. The Christians at Jerusalem escaped the horrors of the siege by a timely retreat to Pella, a small town beyond Jordan. The remainder of this devoted nation, weakened by their losses, and dispirited by their dreadful calamities, were not, at the close of this century, in a situation to oppose openly a sect which they could not however but secretly regard with even additional rancor.

Though the absurdities of Polytheism were openly derided and exposed by the first teachers of Christianity, yet it does not appear that any public laws were enacted against it till the reign of Nero in the year 64, by which time it had acquired considerable stability and extent. As far the greater number of the first converts to Christianity were of the Jewish nation,



one secondary cause for their being so long preserved from persecution may probably be deduced from their appearing to the Roman governors only as a sect of Jews, who had seceded from the rest of their brethren on account of some opinion trifling in its importance, and perhaps difficult to be understood. Nor when their brethren were fully discovered to have cast off the religion of the Synagogue, did the Jews find it easy to infuse into the breasts of the Roman magistrates that rancor and malice which they themselves experienced. But the steady and uniform opposition made by the Christians to heathen superstition could not long pass unnoticed. Their open attacks upon Paganism made them extremely obnoxious to the populace, by whom they were represented as a society of atheists, who, by attacking the religious constitution of the empire, merited the severest animadversion of the civil magistrate. The pure and sublime ideas which they conceived of the Supreme Being could not be comprehended by the gross heathen, who required the Deity to be represented by some corporeal figure, or visible symbol, and adored with all the pomp of altars, sacrifices, and libations. They supposed guilt which had been contracted by every Christian, in thus preferring his private sentiments to the national religion, was aggravated in a high degree by the number and union of the criminals; for the Romans were accustomed to regard with jealousy and distrust any associations among their subjects. They became, likewise, further obnoxious by their cautious method of performing the offices of religion; which, though at first dictated by fear and necessity, was continued from choice, and it was concluded that they only concealed what they would have blushed to disclose. Horrid tales of their abominations were circulated throughout the empire; and the minds of the Pagans were, from all these circumstances, prepared to regard with pleasure or indifference every cruelty which could be inflicted upon this despised sect.

Under these circumstances, it is not wonderful that Nero should select the Christians as a grateful sacrifice to the Roman people, and endeavor to transfer to this hated sect the guilt of which he was strongly suspected, that of having caused and enjoyed the fire which had nearly desolated the city. With this view, he inflicted upon them the most exquisite tortures attended with every circumstance of the most refined cruelty. Some were crucified; others impaled; some were thrown to wild beasts, and others wrapped in garments dipped in pitch and other combustibles, and burned as torches in the gardens of Nero and other parts of the city by night. He was far, however, from obtaining the object of his hopes and expectations; and

the virtues of the Christians, their zeal for the truth, and their constancy in suffering, must have considerably contributed to the respectability of their sect, and to make their tenets more generally known. Alternate scenes of tranquility and persecution succeeded this barbarous attempt, and by uniting the Christians firmly in one common cause, and giving them time to recruit their wearied powers, proved extremely favorable to the support and propagation of Christianity. From the death of Nero to the reign of Domitian, the Christians remained unmolested, and daily increasing; but towards the close of the century, they were again involved in all the horrors of persecution. The death of Domitian, however, soon delivered them from this calamity; and his successor Nerva suffered the Christian church to enjoy a season of tranquility, and rescinded the sanguinary edicts of his predecessor.

The whole of the Christian religion is comprehended in two great points, of which the first regards what we are to believe, and the other relates to the conduct and actions; or to express the matter more briefly, the Gospel presents to us objects of *faith*, and rules of *practice*. The former are expressed by the Apostles by the term *mystery* or the *truth*; and the latter by that of *godliness* or *piety*. The rule and standard of both are those books which contain the revelation that God made of his will to persons chosen for that purpose, whether before or after the birth of Christ. And these divine books are usually called *the Old and New Testament*, but more properly *Covenants*.

The principal articles of faith regard the nature of the divine existence, and the person of Jesus Christ. For the original faith of the Christian church, the Scriptures of the New Testament are certainly the only competent authority; and every succeeding testimony acquires weight and importance only in proportion as it harmonizes with them.

The Christians of the primitive church believed with their ancestors the Jews, in the eternal unity of the Supreme Godhead, from whom, and dependant on whom are all things that exist. They considered Christ Jesus as the image of the invisible God, as the first born of every creature, by whom are all things; by whose ministry the world and all that it contains was created, and by whom the redemption and salvation of mankind was effected.

The union between the Father and the Son, they considered as so strict and indissoluble, that in the language of divines, they were described as con-substantial and co-equal. The *Word*, or the Son of God, was in the beginning with God, and the *Word* was God. In him (that is, in Christ Jesus) dwelt all the fulness



of the Godhead bodily; through him God was said to be manifested in the flesh; and the different attributes of the Deity were all ascribed to the Redeemer.

The Holy Ghost, though considered as the spirit, or active essence of the all governing mind, was yet regarded as a distinct person or character; and was particularly described as such in the celebrated miracle on the day of Pentecost. This unity and co-equality of the three persons or characters of the God-head was afterwards expressed by the word Trinity, or Trinity in Unity.

The history of the divine mission of Christ Jesus, as related in the Gospels of his incarnation, death and resurrection, was of necessity regarded as an essential article of the faith of the church.

The general resurrection of the whole human race, and the distribution of eternal rewards and punishments, according to the respective deserts of each individual, constituted another most important article of belief; since upon this point rests the whole moral obligation of the Christian system.

Among the direct and positive instructions of Jesus Christ, we find none which describe in specific terms that form of government which in future ages the church was to assume. Perhaps there is no particular form or regimen which would be applicable to all possible states and circumstances; though some form or government is absolutely necessary, since without it no discipline or order could be preserved, and no religion could long subsist. From the very first, therefore, we find in the church of Christ a regular chain of authority and subordination. In the appointment of the Twelve Apostles, and in the ordination of the Seventy disciples, we plainly discern a regular and delegated authority, a constitution and a connected body.

The authority exercised by the Apostles, either collectively in what may be termed their council or conference, or in their individual capacity, we find from various passages of the New Testament to have been considerable and extensive. It has been disputed whether or not the episcopal form was that which was first adopted in the church. It has been said that the office of bishop and presbyter was originally the same; and that the name of presbyter or elder was expressive of their age, or rather of their gravity, wisdom, and delegation. Their number was proportionate to the size of their respective congregations. When, by the addition of new converts, the number of churches and ministers necessarily increased, new regulations became necessary: one, therefore, from amongst the presbyters, distin-

guished for his wisdom and piety, was chosen to preside in their councils, to allot to the rest, their respective offices, and to be a centre of union to the whole society. This dignity was conferred for life, except it was forfeited by some misconduct; and the presbyter invested with it was generally styled Bishop, and sometimes the angel of the church to which he belonged.

Many circumstances concur to favor this opinion; but on the contrary it must not be dis-embled that different ranks and degrees appear to have been established from the very first among the ministers of religion. It is impossible to consider the Apostles, or even such eminent persons as Timothy, Titus, &c. as upon an entire footing with the generality of presbyters, or teachers in the different churches. From the Epistles of the primitive fathers, and particularly from those of Saint Ignatius, it appears incontestably that the church government by the three distinct orders of bishops, presbyters and deacons, was fully established in the course of the first century: as each of these orders is particularly addressed, and as that father does not mention the institution as a novelty, there is the utmost reason to believe that this arrangement was made by the Apostles themselves. It must be remembered that Ignatius was the disciple of Saint John, and suffered martyrdom at Rome so early as 107.

The scanty revenues of the ministers arose at first entirely from their share of the *oblations*, or voluntary gifts, which were presented according to the generosity or ability of the congregation. Whenever the episcopal chair became vacant by death, a new President was chosen among the presbyters, to preside over the ministerial functions.

There was but one bishop in each church, or rather in each district; but the number of presbyters appears to have been indefinite, probably depending upon the number, the necessities, or other circumstances of the society. Their employments within the church were in general the same with those of the bishops, and they consisted in the administration of the sacraments and the preservation of the discipline of the church. In many churches, however, preaching was the peculiar office of the bishops. The presbyters were chosen by the united consent of their clerical brethren and the people at large, and ordained by the bishop, assisted by the presbyters.

An inferior order of ministers, called deacons was appointed from the first institution of the church, whose office it was to assist in the administration of the Lord's Supper, to carry the elements to the sick and absent, to receive the oblations of the people, to rebuke those who behaved irreverently during divine service, to relieve the distressed, and to watch over the conduct



of the people. In some churches they also read the Gospels, and were allowed to baptize and to preach. The number of these ministers were not limited, but was generally in proportion to the wants of the church. Some, however, after the example of the church at Jerusalem, confined their number to seven; and the church of Rome thought this rule so obligatory, that when the number of presbyters amounted to forty-six, that of the deacons was limited to seven.

The order of deaconesses was likewise appointed in the apostolic age. These were generally widows, who had only once been married, though this employment was sometimes exercised by virgins. Their office consisted in assisting at the baptism of women, in previously catechising and instructing them, in visiting sick persons of their own sex, and in performing all those inferior offices towards the female part of the congregation, which the deacons were designed to execute for the men.

Such was the arrangement which appears to have been adopted in the primitive constitution of the church. The first century had not, however, elapsed, when an additional order became necessary. The bishops who resided in large and populous cities, prompted by the neighboring converts, whose attendance upon public worship was always inconvenient, and sometimes impossible, erected new churches in the adjacent towns and villages; which naturally continuing under their care and inspection, the districts grew imperceptibly into ecclesiastical provinces, and obtained the name of dioceses. Over the new churches they appointed suffragans to instruct and govern them, who were distinguished by the name of country bishops, and held a middle rank between the bishops and presbyters. The Christian ministers of every rank still derived their support from the voluntary offerings of the people, which after providing for the expenses of public worship, were divided between the bishops and the presbyters, the deacons and the poor.

The first Christian church established at Jerusalem by apostolical authority, became in its doctrine and practices a model for the greater part of those which were founded in the first century. It may easily be conceived that these churches were not superb edifices, purposely erected for the celebration of divine worship. Assembling at first in small numbers, the places where the primitive Christians met for pious purposes, were doubtless sequestered retirements, or the houses of private individuals, which from various reasons, and by various means, would in time become the property of the community, and be gradually extended and improved. Select portions of scripture were publicly read in these assemblies, which were succeeded

by a brief and serious exhortation to the people. The preacher usually delivered his sermons sitting, while the people stood; which was, probably, in conformity to the practice of the synagogue. The prayers formed a considerable part of public worship. To this succeeded the *oblations*, and the distribution of the Lord's Supper; and the whole service concluded with a social and friendly repast, denominated *Agapae*, or the feast of love; to which all who were able contributed, and of which all who were willing partook. During stated intervals of the time allotted to these services hymns were sung, not by the whole assembly, but by persons expressly appointed for that purpose.

Besides the appointment of the first day of the week, by the Apostles, for the public celebration of religious worship, the first Christians are generally believed to have observed two anniversary festivals; the one in remembrance of the resurrection of Christ, and the other to commemorate the descent of the Holy Ghost. From the earliest period of Christianity it however appears, that divine worship was celebrated in a different manner indifferent places. The external government of the church was accommodated to the different situations and opinions of the first Christian believers; and in those societies which were totally or principally composed of the Jewish converts, the Jewish Sabbath, as well as the first day of the week, was kept, and much of the Jewish ritual allowed and observed. The first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem were all circumcised Jews, and the congregation over which they presided, united the law of Moses with the doctrines of Christ.

With respect to the few and simple rites instituted by Christ, it appears, that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered, by the first Christians, whenever they assembled for the purposes of social worship; and so far from being confined to those who had made the greatest progress in religious attainments, it was equally participated by the Apostle of Christ, and the meanest member of the church. The initiatory rite of baptism was usually performed, by immersing the whole body in the baptismal font, and in the earlier periods of Christianity was permitted to all who acknowledged the truths of the Gospel, and promised conformity to its laws. The introduction of unworthy and disorderly persons into the church, from this easiness of admission, naturally narrowed the terms of communion, and baptism was afterwards confined to those who had been previously instructed in religious knowledge, and proved the sincerity of their professions by the regularity of their lives. The probationers for admission into the society of Christians took the humble name of *Catechumens*, while those who were already



consecrated by baptism were distinguished by the superior title of Believers.

The discipline exercised in the primitive church was strict, and even bordering on severity. Two kinds of excommunication were practised at this early period. By the first, profligate persons, heretics and apostates were separated both from the civil and sacred communion of the church, for a period of thirty days; to be renewed at the discretion of the elders, &c. The other was termed *anathema*, or “the delivering of a convict to Satan,” which was a still more complete exclusion; and it appears that it was thus termed, because the offender was in that case supposed to be delivered up defenceless to his spiritual enemy, unprotected by the prayers of the church, or the benefit of the holy sacrament. This last species of excommunication was reserved for very flagrant and obstinate sinners, generally indeed inflicted upon those who were found incorrigible by the former means.

Were we to expect that so considerable a number of men, as those who embraced Christianity in the first century, would be actuated exactly by the same opinions, we should form an expectation not warranted by our own experience, or the conduct of mankind in every age. The doctrines and precepts of Christianity, so easily to be comprehended and understood, were indeed, at a very early period, blended with the most fantastical opinions. The pure stream of religious truth was polluted by error even during the lives of the Apostles. The scrupulous adherence of the Jewish converts to the Mosaic law, occasioned several of them obstinately to contend for the ceremonies of their ancestors, and rendered them desirous of imposing them on the Gentile Christians. A large party separated from the church, and regarded those whom they had been long accustomed to consider as a people rejected by God, with a degree of contempt and hatred, which naturally produced reciprocal dislike; each indulged dispositions inimical to brotherly love, together with certain peculiar religious opinions resulting from former practices and opinions.

These Judaizing Christians were first known by the general appellation of Nazarenes; but a division of them was afterwards distinguished, though it is uncertain at what time, by the name of *Ebionites*, which according to Origen and Eusebius is derived from *Ebion*, a poor or despicable man, from the mean opinion they entertained of Christ. Besides their adherence to the Jewish law, Theodoret ascribes to them other opinions. They contended, it is said, most strenuously for the unity of the Godhead in the person of the Father and asserted that Jesus was a mere man, born after the common course of nature, of human parents, Joseph and Mary, but that the Holy Ghost descended

upon him at his baptism, and continued to actuate and inspired him till his death. They observed both the Jewish and the Christian Sabbath.

From the imperfections of the Jewish dispensation, the Gnostics (*wise* or *knowing*) hastily inferred that it was not instituted by the Supreme Being; and, assuming that pompous appellation, boasted their ability to restore to mankind that knowledge of his nature which had so long been lost. They blended with the faith of Christ many sublime but obscure tenets, which they derived from the Oriental philosophy. The sages of the east had long expected a heavenly messenger, endued with sufficient powers to release them from their bondage to corrupt *matter*, which they held to be the source of all evil. The miracles of Christ and his Apostles induced them readily to accept him as this heavenly messenger, and they interpreted all the precepts of Christianity in the manner most agreeable to the absurd opinions they had previously conceived. They introduced amongst their followers a multitude of absurd legends respecting the actions and precepts of Christ, and of the creation of the world by inferior beings. These opinions were so entirely dissonant to many parts both of the old and New Testament, that they rejected much of these books, though they admitted the validity of a few parts. From the belief that whatever is corporeal is in itself intrinsically evil, they denied that Christ was invested with a *real* body, or that he really suffered for the sake of mankind. As the Son of the Supreme God, they indeed consented to regard him; but regarded him as inferior in his nature, and believed that his mission upon earth was designed to rescue the virtuous soul from the tyranny of wicked spirits whose empire he was to destroy, and to instruct men to raise the mind from its corporeal impurity, to a blessed union with the Supreme God.

Far removed from the path of truth, it is not surprising that, having no certain rule to guide their steps, they could separate and wander into the manifold intricacies of error. Accordingly, we find the Gnostic heretics were not only divided into many sects, differing in their various rules of religious faith, but in matters which related to practice. Whilst the more rigid sects rejected the most innocent gratifications, that the body might not be so nourished as to degrade the soul; their more relaxed brethren considered the soul as entirely unaffected by the actions of the body, asserted the innocence of complying with every dictate of nature, and abandoned themselves without any restraint to the impulse of the passions. Their persuasion that evil resided in *matter*, led them to reject the doctrine of the resurrection of the body; and their belief in the power of ma-



levolent *genii*, the sources of every earthly calamity, induced them to have recourse to the study of magic to weaken or avert the influence of those malignant agents. A very considerable sect of Gnostics distinguished themselves by the name of *Docetæ*, but their peculiar opinions are not accurately known.

Cerinthus, by birth a Jew, was one of the earliest and most distinguished seceders from the church. He allowed indeed that the Creator of the world was the lawgiver of the Jews, and a being endued at first with the greatest virtue, but asserted that he derived his power from the supreme God, and that he had by degress fallen from his native dignity and virtue. That in order to destroy his corrupted empire, the supreme Being had commissioned one of his *glorious Eons*, whose name was Christ, to descend upon earth, that he entered into the body of Jesus which was crucified, but that the Christ had not suffered, but ascended into heaven.

Cerinthus required his followers to retain part of the Mosai-cal law, but to regulate their lives by the example of Christ; and taught that after the resurrection of Christ he would reign upon earth, with his faithful disciples, a thousand years, which would be spent in the highest sensual indulgences. This mixture of Judaism and Oriental philosophy was calculated to make many converts, and this sect soon became very numerous. They admitted a part of Saint Matthew's Gospel; but rejected the rest, and held the epistle of St. Paul in great abhorrence.

The Oriental philosophy, that baneful source of prejudice, was so deeply rooted in the minds of great numbers, as to afford a wide extent to the exertions of imposition or fanaticism. Either deceived themselves by a heated imagination, or desirous to impose upon others, several represented themselves as celestial beings, sent down upon earth to purify corruption and destroy error. Among the most considerable of these impostors were Simon Magus and his disciple Menander, whose pernicious tenets were similar in many respects. Simon, who taught his doctrines about the year 35, asserted that he was the *great power of God*, that he descended from heaven to deliver man, that he had assumed the human form, and that, though he had apparently suffered death in Judea, he had not in reality. He taught farther that all human actions are in themselves indifferent, and allowed his followers to indulge themselves in the greatest licentiousness. He ascribed to his mistress Helena the production of angels, and to these angels the creation of the world; and composed books for the use of his followers, which he attributed to Christ and the Apostles. Ecclesiasti-

cal history presents us with an account of several more absurdities which were blended with Christianity at a very early period. But these different modifications of folly would afford a very tedious and unpleasing, as well as a very unprofitable detail.

The little assistance derived by Christianity from the wealth or dignity of its first professors has already been observed; nor, if we except the apostolical writings, where the compositions of the Christian writers in the first century so distinguished, either by their number or eloquence, as to force themselves into the notice, or captivate the taste of mankind. The purity of its doctrines, and the virtues of its professors, were the instruments for opening the human heart to conviction and to the truth of this revelation.

Among the writers of this century, the most distinguished place, after the inspired penman, is due to Clemens, the friend and fellow laborer of St. Paul, who describes him as having "his name written in the book of life." There are extant two epistles to the Corinthians which are ascribed to him; but the latter is generally reputed not genuine. Clemens Alexandrinus seems to acknowledge only one. Eusebius speaks of it in the singular. He is mentioned by Irenæus as the third bishop of Rome. The epistle which is accounted genuine is written in a truly apostolic spirit, and with great simplicity of style. Several spurious compositions were falsely attributed to Clemens. Among others, it was asserted that he assisted the twelve Apostles in compiling what are called the Apostolical Constitutions, and in fact acted as their amanuensis. The Constitutions however are, in the judgment of the acute and able Jortin, and in that of other learned men, a despicable forgery.

The epistle ascribed to Barnabas was probably written by an unknown author, who assumed the name of that apostle. Of the writings of Papias, the disciple of the Evangelist John, and the first propagator of the doctrine of a Millennium, nothing remains but the fragments of an historical performance.

The Pastor of Hermans is generally allowed to be genuine, and it is also probable that it was the work of that Hermans who is spoken of by St. Paul, though some have ascribed it to a certain Hermas, or Hermes, brother to Pius bishop of Rome, who lived in the succeeding century. The work is entirely allegorical, consisting of visions and similitudes. Like all works of this nature, it is extremely unequal as a composition, and I confess but little satisfactory to my judgment. It was however in high estimation in the early ages, and is spoken of as Scripture both by Irenæus and Tertullian.



One of the most excellent and valuable characters in the latter part of this century was St. Ignatius, the second bishop of Antioch, who, as he is considered as one of the apostolic fathers, is classed in this century, though in reality he did not suffer martyrdom till 107. It is to the disgrace of the otherwise moderate and upright Trajan, that by his sentence this venerable man was condemned to be thrown to the wild beasts at Rome; a sentence which he received without dismay and even with satisfaction. He has left behind him several epistles to the different churches. It has been thought that the shorter epistles bear stronger marks of authenticity than the larger. They were written in his journey from Syria to the Roman capital, with a spirit and force which never deserted him under the insolent treatment of the band appointed to conduct him, and in the prospect of those cruel sufferings which terminated his existence.

In our account of authors in this century it would be improper to omit noticing two, who however cannot strictly be classed with the Christian writers. The first was Philo, a Jew, who applied the philosophy of Plato to the illustration of the Scripture, and was in high repute with his countrymen.

The other was of the same nation, and outwardly at least, of the same religion, but still more illustrious as an author. The reader will anticipate the name of Josephus, whose history of the Jews is so universally popular. Being taken prisoner by Vespasian, he was treated with great kindness by that emperor, and seems to have returned the favor by a profusion of flattery. From slight but respectful allusions to Christianity, however, which appear in his works, Mr. Whitson and other learned persons have conjectured that he was in reality an Ebionite Christian, but cautiously concealed his religion both from the jealousy of his own nation and that of the Romans.

Foundations for securing a succession of advocates for the truth, were very easily established. Public Schools were erected for instructing children in the Christian faith; and several seminaries, upon still more extensive plans, were founded in several cities; in which those who were advanced in years, particularly those who were intended for the ministry were instructed both in divine and human erudition. One was erected at Ephesus by Saint John; another by Polycarp, at Smyrna; and a third, which far surpassed the rest in reputation, at Alexandria, is supposed to have been founded by Saint Mark.

## CHAPTER III.

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### THE SECOND CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—OF DOCTRINE, GOVERNMENT, RITES, AND CEREMONIES.—OF THE SECTS WHICH EXISTED IN THE SECOND CENTURY.—OF LEARNING AND LEARNED MEN.

The Christian religion, during the first century, had acquired considerable stability and extent. In the second, its conquests became still further expanded. Far from being confined to the poor, the illiterate, or the wretched, who sought in the belief of immortality a refuge from the miseries of life, its truths were received and acknowledged by the rich, the accomplished, the learned. Paganism lamented the desertion of her temples, the neglect of her victims, and the increase of a power which threatened her with unavoidable destruction.

Amongst the secondary causes for the success of Christianity, none could be more persuasive, none indeed equally powerful with the marked virtues and distinguished purity of its early professors. Relinquishing the delights and the splendor of vanity, they voluntarily renounced their possessions for the relief of their indigent brethren: but these renunciations, unlike those of the heathen philosophers, were not sacrifices of sensuality at the shrine of pride; they proceeded from the purest motives, and were performed with the sublimest views. This propriety of conduct, so necessary to the credit and support of a rising sect, was attested by their governors, witnesses of indisputable authority, since they regarded the doctrines of this new religion with abhorrence, and its professors with contempt. The contrast between their resigned and devout manners, and the conduct of the other subjects of the Roman empire during a season of peculiar calamity, is strongly marked by the discriminating and unprejudiced pen of Marcus Aurelius. No pretext except their confirmed abhorrence for the popular superstition, was afforded them for the persecutions in which they were involved. They could assert with confidence, and the assertion was uncontroverted before the tribunal of their judge,



that far from being engaged in any unlawful conspiracy, they were bound by a solemn obligation to abstain from those crimes which disturb the public or private peace of society, from theft, sedition, adultery, perjury, or fraud. To their freedom from these vices they added a warm and active charity, not confined to the particular society to which they belonged, nor even to the whole Christian community, but extending to all, however different in religious opinions.

The validity of the Gospel revelation was, even before the end of the first century, submitted to the general consideration of mankind. Nearly the whole of the Scriptures was before that period translated into Latin, a language so well and so extensively known as to be understood even in the remotest parts of the Roman Empire. The reception of these sacred books at a period when from their recent dates the truth of every circumstance might be without difficulty ascertained, is one among the numerous proofs of the truth of the Gospel. Nor were the errors of the first sectaries without a beneficial influence upon the Christian church. The Gnostics, who denied any revelation antecedent to that by Christ Jesus, opened a door of communion to the pagan converts, who, with that pride inherent in man, could not at once be made to conceive that they had haughtily rejected a revelation so long and so fully established.

The conduct of the Roman Emperors towards the Christians in the second century, though sometimes harsh and cruel, yet upon the whole was mild and tolerant. The decrees of Trajan respecting them were softened by the counsels and influence of the mild and beneficent Pliny. Their enemies were forbidden to produce any anonymous accusations against them, and they were left at liberty to retire from observation. The number of Gentile converts was generally augmented and the Christian church was established in very remote parts of the Roman empire.

It is to be lamented, but must not be concealed, that all the members of this communion were not worthy of the advantages they enjoyed. Greatly enlarged in its numbers, it is not indeed wonderful that some should have been admitted into the Christian communion, whose virtue melted in the intense heat of persecution, or whose piety had been the transient effect of a momentary impression; nor could the defection of such of its votaries have materially injured the Christian cause. But the simple and majestic fabric reared by Christ and his Apostles was in some degree undermined in its foundation, by the prevalence of an opinion which was disseminated in this century, that the whole duties of religion were not equally incumbent upon all.

but that a sublimer degree of virtue was to be pursued and attained by those, who in solitude and contemplation, aspired to an intimate communion with the Supreme Being, whilst inferior attainments were sufficient for men who were engaged in the active employments of life. In consequence of this absurd opinion, the moral doctrines of Christianity were divided into *precepts* and *counsels*, the former of which distinguishes those laws which are of universal obligation, and the latter those which relate to the conduct of Christians of superior merit and sanctity. These opinions were propagated with great reputation, towards the close of the second century, by Ammonius Saccus, who taught in the school of Alexandria. This person a professed follower of the Platonic philosophy,\* maintained not merely with the primitive Eclectics, that truth and falsehood were blended in the opinions of every sect, but that the great principles of all truth, whether philosophical or religious, were equally discoverable in all sects; and that the only difference between them consisted in a different mode of expression, and in some points of little or no importance. By a proper interpretation of these sentiments, he contended that all sects whether philosophical or religious, might easily coalesce in the universal philosophy which, however then perverted, was the great source of all the religious opinions that prevailed in the world; but that in order to this the fables of the priests were to be removed from paganism, and the comments and interpretations of the Disciples of Jesus from Christianity. He asserted that the errors of paganism proceeded from the symbols and fictions under which, according to the eastern manner, it had been inculcated by the ancients; that in time these were erroneously understood in a literal sense, whence the invisible beings who were placed by the Deity in different parts of the universe, as his ministers were converted by the suggestions of superstition into gods, and worshiped as such, though in fact deserving only an inferior kind of homage. Jesus Christ he considered as an excellent being, the friend of the Deity; but supposed that his design in descending upon earth was not to abolish the worship of demons, to purify the ancient religion and restore the true philosophy; the great path of truth from which all had wandered, but that his Disciples had manifestedly corrupted the doctrines of their Divine Master.

Ammonius adopted the doctrines of the Egyptians concern-

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\*The Platonic philosophy took its rise, not from the doctrines of Plato, but from the belief of its professors, that the sentiments of Plato respecting the Deity and the invisible world were much more sublime and rational than those of the other philosophers.



ing the universe and the Deity as constituting one great whole; the *eternity of the world*, the *nature of souls*, the *empire of providence*, and the *government of the world by demons*. These sentiments he associated with the doctrines of Plato, by adulterating some of the opinions of that philosopher, and forcing his expressions from their obvious and literal sense; and to complete his conciliatory scheme for the restoration of true philosophy and the union of its professors, he interpreted so artfully the doctrines of the other philosophical and religious sects that they appeared closely to resemble the Egyptian and Platonic systems.

The philosophical system was soon embraced by those among the Alexandrian Christians, who were desirous to unite the profession of the Gospel with the dignity, the title, and the habit of philosophers. The school of Ammonius\* extended itself from Egypt over the whole Roman empire, but its disciples were soon divided into various sects; a certain consequence of that fundamental law, which all who embraced it were obliged to keep perpetually in view, *that truth was to be pursued with the utmost liberty, and to be collected from the different systems in which it lay dispersed*. Hence the Athenian Christians rejected the opinions entertained by the philosophers of Alexandria. But all who aspired to rank with the new Platonics agreed in their opinion of the *existence of one God the source of all*, the *eternity of the world*, the *dependence of matter upon the Supreme Being*, the *nature of souls*, the *plurality of gods*, and the *method of interpreting the popular superstition*. The rules prescribed by this sect were extremely austere; the people at large were indeed permitted to live conformably to the laws of their country, and the dictates of nature; but the *wise* were enjoined to extenuate by mortification the sluggish body which confined the activity of the immortal spirit, that in life they might enjoy communion with the Deity, and ascend after death, alone and unencumbered, to dwell in his presence for ever.

This philosophy, which involved the truth of the Gospel in subtlety and obscurity, and added to the doctrine of Christ the commandments of men, became in time extremely prejudicial to the Christian cause. It will be easily conceived that these opinions produced in time those voluntary seclusions from the world, which confined or destroyed the utility of a considerable portion of mankind. But its tendency, however injurious, was still less pernicious than an opinion derived from those philosoph-

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\*The credit of this school was highly advanced by the profound and inventive genius of Plotinus, who disseminated its doctrines, in Persia, at Rome, and in Campania.

ic sects, who affirmed that it was not only lawful but laudable to deceive, in order to advance the interests of religion. This detestable sentiment, at first probably very cautiously propagated, and very sparingly used, opened wide the gates of falsehood, and in succeeding ages filled the whole system with absurd legends, pretended miracles, and that train of imposture which, while it disgraced human nature, was dignified with the perfidious title of *pious fraud*.

Notwithstanding that during the greatest part of this century the Christians were suffered to remain unmolested, the sword of persecution was sheathed but not thrown away; and it was frequently suspended by a single hair over their devoted heads. Their peculiar manners, habits, and the zeal with which they avoided the feasts and solemnities of the pagan worship, were occasions of implacable hatred in their heathen brethren, who regarded them as unsocial and austere, considered their claims to superiority as arrogant, and from not beholding any visible object of their worship, treated their pretensions to religion as improbable, if not impious. If they withdrew from them the charge of atheism, it was only to load them with the imputation of human sacrifices† and incestuous festivals; to which practices they could alone ascribe their meeting in solitary places, without any of these appendages to worship which they conceived necessary to render their piety acceptable. The humane interference of the benevolent Pliny was insufficient to put an entire stop to the persecutions against the Christians under Trajan; and in the succeeding reign, Adrian was persuaded to mitigate, but not to abrogate, the penalties enacted against them.

The calamities suffered by the Christians were not entirely owing to the instigation of their pagan adversaries. Their Jewish opponents had the address to increase, if not to excite against them, the popular resentment. The seditious spirit of this people was exerted also with equal violence against the Roman government. They were engaged in several revolts, and repeatedly vanquished; but so little was their rebellious spirit subdued, that, in the reign of Adrian, they openly assembled in very considerable numbers under one who assuming the title of Barchochebas (son-of-a-star,) set himself up for their Messiah, and whom they acknowledged as their king. Their efforts for liberty were however vain. Depressed by all the miseries of war and famine, they were, after a rebellion of four years, defeated

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† The foundation of the atrocious charge of sacrificing children on certain festivals, has been very acutely investigated by some learned men in the last century. Some have supposed it to originate from the baptizing of infants.



by the imperial army. Incredible numbers perished by the sword, or were sold into captivity; their leader, who after his defeat was denominated Barchosbeas (son-of-a-lie,) was publicly put to death, and their ancient city raised to its foundations. The Emperor, highly incensed by the repeated seditions of this turbulent people, determined to inflict upon the remaining Jews a severe and continued punishment. For this purpose, after building a new city called *Ælia Capitolina* upon the ruins of Jerusalem, he prohibited the Jews, under the severest penalties, from approaching its precincts. Many of them, however, still remained in Palestine, and it was not till after repeated revolts that they were reduced to subjection.

In the succeeding reign of Antonius Pius, the disciples of Christ were again involved in a partial persecution in consequence of an earthquake in Asia, which they were accused of having provoked by their neglect of the gods, and their impious refusal to deprecate their wrath. This persecution was however confined to some provinces; and an apology by Justin Martyr for the Christian Religion, which is still extant, being put into the hands of this excellent monarch, he had the good sense and justice to perceive their innocence and to publish an imperial edict, prohibiting in future all severities towards them.

Antoninus, it is well known, was succeeded by the celebrated Stoic Marcus Aurelius. During the dawn of his reign the Christians enjoyed the beneficial influence of philosophy; but it was soon clouded by his avowed dislike, and numbers of both sexes became the victims of a persecution which though connived at and even encouraged by the most philosophic and accomplished of the Roman emperors, vied in cruelty with that of a Nero.

As the character of the virtuous Trajan is sullied by the martyrdom of Ignatius, so the reign of the philosophic Marcus is for ever disgraced by the sacrifice of the venerable Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, the friend and companion of St. John. A few days previous to his death he is said to have dreamed that his pillow was on fire. When urged by the Proconsul to renounce Christ, he replied—"Fourscore and six years have I served him, and he has never done me an injury—Can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?" Several miracles are reported to have happened at his death. The flames, as if unwilling to injure his sacred person, are said to have arched over his head; and it is added, that at length being dispatched with a sword, a dove flew out of the mound; and that from the pile proceeded a most flagrant smell. It is obvious that the arching of the flames might be an accidental effect, which the

enthusiastic veneration of his disciples might convert into a miracle; and as to the story of the dove, &c. Eusebius himself apparently did not credit it, since he has omitted it in his narrative of the transaction.

Among many other victims of persecution in this philosophic reign we must also record that of the excellent and learned Justin. But it was at Lyons and Vienne in Gaul that the most shocking scenes were acted. Among many nameless sufferers, history has preserved from oblivion Pothinus, the respectable bishop of Lyons, who was then more than ninety years of age; Sanctus, a deacon of Vienne; Attalus, a native of Pergamus; Maturus and Alexander; some of whom were devoured by wild beasts, and some of them tortured in an iron chair made red hot. Some females also, and particularly Biblias and Blandina, reflected honor both upon their sex and their religion by their constancy and courage.

The cause of paganism, however, gained not much by these cruel executions. The pious lives, the resigned deaths of several of the professors of Christianity in the second century cried aloud, and the voice was heard. They had embraced the religion of Christianity in the prospect of sufferings and death, and they were supported under these sufferings agreeably to the promises of the Gospel. The apologies for their religion, which were addressed by several of the Christian writers to the Emperors, were appeals to the reason as well as to the humanity of those for whom they were intended. It is indeed probable that some of them were never honored by the perusal of the monarch. But as they asserted facts, of which all might easily be convinced; as the motives, the sufferings, and the conduct of the persecuted sectaries were by these means more extensively known, it is highly probable that they largely contributed to diffuse the truth of the Gospel. To these causes for the extension of religious knowledge, must be added the forcible argument of miracles, which there is much reason from the testimony of the writers of the second century, to believe still existed. It does not, indeed, appear at what period of time the miraculous powers which had so greatly assisted the propagation of Christianity were withdrawn, nor is it all necessary that the precise time should be ascertained. Those who believe that God neither bestows less than is necessary, nor more than is sufficient, will easily conceive, that, when by supernatural means, Christianity was widely diffused, and when, from various causes, mankind were disposed to receive the Gospel with less aversion, the powers which were no longer necessary, were no longer given. Fraud, fanaticism, and credulity, have continued miracles almost to the present time. It appears probable, however, from



the silence or the testimony of the ancient fathers, that miraculous gifts became gradually less frequent, and in a very early period entirely ceased. The same suspicions which have fallen upon the later miracles have justly been applied to the later pretensions to a prophetic spirit. It is, however probable that the gifts of prophecy was conferred, though perhaps in smaller portions, during the second century, as it is mentioned by Justin Martyr, in his dialouge with Trypho. To these causes for the progress of religion must be added the labors of several missionaries, who, warmed with pious zeal, journeyed into remote countries for the propagation of truth; among whom was the learned Pantænus, who traveled as far as India.

Confining himself to those obvious rules of faith and practice, which were appointed by Christ, and to the observance of those simple institutions adorned by the Apostles, the primitive believer pursued his way with undeviating steps: and although, as we have already seen, the loquacious and controversial genius of the Heathen philosophy had in the second century made some progress even in the body of the Christian church, still the established creed remained in a great measure undepraved and uncorrupted. In the invaluable remains of Irenæus the bishop of Lyons we find a compendium of the Christian faith, as professed in his time. "The church," says he, which is dispersed through the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the Apostles and their immediate disciples, the belief in one God, the Father Almighty, the maker of the heaven, the earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; and in one Jesus Christ the Son of God, made flesh for our salvation, and in the Holy Ghost, who by the prophets revealed the dispensation and the coming of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, his birth by a Virgin, his passion, his resurrection, his ascension into heaven in the flesh, and his advent from heaven in the glory of the Father to the gathering together of all things, and the raising up of the flesh of all mankind; that in Christ Jesus our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King, according to the good pleasure of the invisible Father, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things on earth, and of things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess to him; and in all things he will execute righteous judgment; both the evil spirits and the angels who sinned and became apostates, and the impious, the unjust, the breakers of the law and the blasphemers among men, he will send into everlasting fire; but to the just, and holy, and to those who keep his commandments, and remain in his love, whether from the beginning, or whether they have repent-

ed of their sins, he will give life, and incorruptibility, and glory for ever."

The reader will easily perceive that this early creed has served as the basis of that which is now termed the Apostles' Creed, and which was probably compiled and digested in the succeeding century.

From the writings of Justin, Clement, Theophilus, Irenæus, Tertullian and others, we have abundant evidence that the doctrine of the Trinity was strongly asserted by the church in this century against the sectaries of every denomination. It is indeed in this age that the word *Trinity* appears to have been introduced. The fathers of this century in general are equally strenuous in maintaining the other articles of faith, as specified in the preceding extract.

The moral principles of the Christian religion, however, in this century, appears to have suffered some invasion; the text of the Scriptures was attempted in some instances to be accommodated to the immoral practices of the heathens; and the doctrines of different duties being requisite to different orders of Christians, and that it was lawful to deceive in order to advance the interests of religion, were propagated both in the discourses and writings of many of the early professors of Christianity.

It is probable that, in the beginning of the second century, many of the immediate successors and disciples of the Apostles continued to practise those few and simple rules relative to the government of the church, which they had appointed or approved. Those who devolved the care of their churches upon one of the elders, and traveled for the propagation of Christianity into distant lands, would probably endeavor to direct the people to the selection of a person who, at the same time that he was eminently qualified to conduct the worship and concerns of the congregation, would be one whose piety and humility might prevent him from making any innovations upon the simplicity of the apostolic rules. Accordingly we find, at the commencement of this century, that few alterations had been proposed or adopted by the church. The bishops and presbyters were still undistinguished by any superiority of station or difference of apparel; they were still chosen by the people, and subsisted upon a proportion of the voluntary offerings which were paid by every believer according to the exigencies of the occasion, or the measure of his wealth and piety. The bishop, assisted by the presbyters and deacons, to each of whom he distributed their respective employments, superintended and regulated the ecclesiastical concerns of the society. He was the steward of the church; the public stock was entrusted to his



care, without account or control: the presbyters were confined to their spiritual functions, and the deacons were solely employed under the bishop in the management and distribution of the ecclesiastical revenue. A decent portion of it was reserved for the maintenance of the bishop and his clergy, a sufficient sum was allotted for the expenses of public worship, and the whole remainder was appropriated to the sick, the aged, the indigent, and the oppressed.

Each Christian society, governed by its own laws, and directed by its own ministers, formed within itself an independent republic, unconnected with its neighboring state by any other alliances than those of mutual faith and reciprocal good offices. But near the end of the second century the churches of Greece and Asia established, as a custom and a law, that the bishops of the independent churches should meet in the capital of the province at the stated periods of spring and autumn. Their deliberations at these meetings were assisted by the advice of a few distinguished presbyters, and the utility of them was so apparent, that they were universally adopted by all the Christian churches. The decrees which were enacted there were styled *Canons*, and regarded and regulated every important controversy of faith and discipline. A regular correspondence was established between the provincial councils, which mutually communicated and approved their respective proceedings, and the church by degrees assumed the form, and indeed acquired the strength, of a great federative republic.

It is not to be supposed, in this arrangement, either that the people foresaw the alienation of their rights, or that the clergy looked forward to that power which in succeeding ages, was obtained by the ecclesiastical order. The perfect equality of rank which had subsisted amongst the bishops in these assemblies, was diminished at first, perhaps, by the ascendancy that a strong mind naturally obtains over one which is weaker; and this inferiority was afterwards confirmed by the necessity which arose of exalting one to the office of perpetual president, for the preservation of order in the assembly. The time when this dignity was first conferred is not precisely ascertained, but it is probable not till the middle or towards the close of the succeeding century. It was given to the bishop of the principal city in those provinces where the synods were held, who was honored with the the appellation of metropolitan or primate.

The sacrament of the Lord's supper, which was celebrated whenever the primitive church assembled for the purpose of sacred worship, was administered not only to the meanest, but to the youngest member of the congregation. Its species were



common bread and wine, which were consecrated by the prayers of the bishop, or presiding priest. It was given to children under the species of wine, and the observance of it was conceived of such peculiar importance, that it was sent from the society to all the sick or absent members. Baptism was publicly performed twice a year. The catechumens (or probationers for baptism) assembled in the church on the great festivals of Easter and Whitsuntide; and after a public declaration of their faith, and a solemn assurance from their sponsors that it was their intention to live conformably to the Gospel, they received the sacrament of baptism. This rite was performed by three immersions, and the body was divested of clothes. In order to preserve decency in the operation, the baptismal font of the women was separated from that of the men, and they were as much as possible attended by the deaconesses of the church. Baptism by aspersion was permitted to the sick; and in cases where a sufficient quantity of water for immersion could not be procured. The sign of the cross was made use of in this rite; and a solemn prayer was uttered on consecrating the baptismal water. Confirmation immediately succeeded the performance of this rite. The earliest and most express records testify that infant baptism was usual in the church. Parents were originally sponsors for their infant children, and one sponsor only was required. In the case of adults, the sex of the sponsor was the same with that of the person baptized; but in infants no respect was paid to this circumstance.

It is not easy to determine the period when prayers for the dead began first to be offered up in the Christian church. The first author who mentions this custom is Tertullian. It is highly probable that this practice, which led to the doctrine of purgatory, was not instituted from any belief of that state, but from a conviction that all men are sinners; to implore the Almighty to deal with them in mercy, not in justice:—to distinguish between the perfections of men; and as a testimonial of their belief in the immortality of the soul, which, however, they conceived to exist in but an imperfect state of happiness, or to have its consciousness suspended till the general resurrection.

It is highly probable that Easter was instituted as a festival from the earliest period in the Christian church; but the first observation of that season is very uncertain. The feast of Whitsuntide possibly took its rise in this century, as well as that of Christmas. During the three or four first centuries, the nativity of Christ was celebrated on the sixth day, which is now called the Epiphany, in commemoration of the incarnation; and under this general name were understood both the nativity and

baptism of our Lord, till the church agreed to observe the nativity on the 25th of December, when that and the Epiphany came to be considered as distinct festivals. The whole of the time between the celebration of Easter and Whitsuntide which was fifty days, was observed as a festival.

It appears from the authority of a writer of this century, that before its close several fasts were observed by some churches. The apostolical Lent consisted of only a few days before Easter, but to this were added the fourth and sixth days of the week; the former on account of the Jews taking counsel together on that day to put Jesus to death, and the latter because on that day he actually suffered. The weekly fasts were commonly observed till the ninth hour, or three in the afternoon, and differed in that respect from the fast before Easter, which lasted the whole day: they were, however, intermitted during the season between Easter and Whitsuntide.

The union between the primitive Christians was so intimate, that it is probable few transactions of importance in their private concerns would take place, without mutual communication. Thus much however is certain, that all who intended to marry acquainted the church with their design before it was completed. These marriages were preceded by the espousal, which took place a considerable time before the marriage was solemnized, by various ceremonies, and the man presenting his future bride with a ring, a practice which was adopted from the Romans. At the appointed time the marriage was solemnized by the priest; the right hands of the contracting parties were joined together; and the bride modestly veiled, after receiving the nuptial benediction, was crowned with flowers.

Ecclesiastical censures, which are so necessary for the honor, the order, and even the preservation of a regular society, were publicly denounced against the offender who had relapsed into idolatry, or fallen into gross sin. Whatever his excuses, he was deprived of every part in the oblations, avoided by the whole church, and excluded from the assemblies of the faithful. In vain he implored for re-admission into the society, till he was humbled by a public confession of his sins, and had given solemn assurances of his intentions to conform to the Christian laws, and undeniable proofs of the sincerity of his repentance. Some of the churches which affected great austerity utterly excluded the atrocious sinner, the heretic, or the apostate, from the hopes of a re-admission into their communion. By degrees, however, this severity universally relaxed, and the gates of reconciliation were again opened to the returning penitent, who, by a severe and solemn form of discipline, had expiated his



crime, and who exhibited a scene which might powerfully deter the spectator from an imitation of his guilt. The priest who had committed any notorious offence was no more exempted from the discipline of the church than the most obscure sinner. The arms of mercy might again be extended to him, but not till he had first performed the lowest acts of humiliation and abasement; had complied with the appointed rules for all excommunicants, prostrated himself in sackcloth at the door of the assembly, humbly implored the pardon of his offences, and made a public recantation of his sin. Nor even then was he restored to the honors of which he had been deprived. He was re-admitted indeed, as a member of the general society, but his claim to the honors of the ministry existed no more.

Besides the observance of the first day of the week, all Christians agreed in celebrating the seventh in conformity to the Jewish converts. It was, however observed very differently from the Christian Sabbath. An observance of the festivals of Easter and Whitsuntide was esteemed incumbent upon all Christians, though they differed materially in the respect they paid to the lesser rites: while some abstained from the flesh of beasts which had been strangled, and from blood, others ate with impunity; while some solemnized the fourth day of the week, in which Christ was betrayed, others observed the sixth, on which he suffered. Nor does it appear that those different regulations occasioned any uneasiness or scandal in the church.

He must be ignorant of the varying dispositions of mankind, who can conceive that the different opinions which divided the professors of the Gospel, during the second century, into numerous sects, can possibly be ascribed to any defect in the doctrines of its divine teacher. Man is continually the dupe of prejudice and error; and the various prejudices of Judaism, oriental philosophy, and paganism, may reasonably be conceived to be almost necessarily blended with the religion of many of the first converts to Christianity.

By far the greater part of the heretics of the second century were Gnostics, and derived their errors from the mixture of Christianity with the oriental philosophy. Their tenets are represented as so many different modifications of that fantastical system. The followers of Saturninus and Basilides, who may be considered as Heresiarchs, and as having reached almost the summit of absurdity spread themselves over Syria and Egypt, and propagated the doctrine of a *good and evil principle*, which was also inculcated by Bardesanes, a Syrian of considerable abilities. Basilides asserted that two of the Eons which were produced by the Supreme Being where the parents of innum-

able hosts of angels, the inhabitants of three hundred and sixty-five heavens, which were under the dominion of an omnipotent governor named Abraxas. This word was used by his disciples as a mystical term, because it contained numeral letters to the amount of three hundred and sixty-five. This sectary admitted the validity of the New Testament, with such alterations as he conceived necessary. The condition he required from his followers was a continual silence for five years; a very proper method, as is observed by Le Clerc, to make an experiment of their folly.

The fanciful Cerdon, a native also of the warm climate of Syria, and Marcion, son to the bishop of Pontus, erected on the foundation of the Gnostics a structure of considerable extent. They taught their doctrines conjointly at Rome. To the two Principles already admitted by the Gnostics, they added a third, whom they conceived to be the Creator of the world, and the God of the Jews, and asserted that he was in a state of continual hostility with the evil principle, but desirous of usurping the place of the Supreme Being. Mankind, they asserted, was governed despotically by the two former of these beings, but added, that the Supreme had sent down his own Son for the deliverance of all, who, by self-denial and austerity sought to obtain that happiness. The followers of Cerdon and Marcion were distinguished by the name of the latter. They entirely rejected the Old Testament, and the whole of the New, except part of the Gospel of St. Luke, and ten epistles of St. Paul, which were greatly interpolated. This sect was diffused, not only through Rome and Italy, but extended itself over Palestine, Syria, and Egypt.

The austerities of the Encratites, the disciples of the learned Tatian, greatly exceeded even those of the Marcionites. They held matter as the source of all evil, and therefore condemned the most innocent gratifications. They were indeed so abstemious as to give only water in the celebration of the Lord's supper. The creation of the world was considered by them as the work of a Deity of an inferior nature to the Supreme Being, and the body of Christ as an appearance, not a reality. Carpocrates, though likewise a convert to the tenets of Gnosticism, was distinguished by manners exactly the reverse of the followers of Tatian. He asserted that good and evil were the mere result of opinion; that faith and charity were alone essential to salvation; and that the passions being implanted in man by the Supreme Being, obedience to their dictates was the duty of all mankind. These opinions, so well calculated to flatter the corrupt propensities of human nature, were extensively received. To these, Carpocrates added a disbelief of the resurrec-



tion of the body, and many opinions which blended Christianity with Oriental Philosophy. Perhaps this heretic is the first who asserted the simple humanity of Christ, who, he contended, was only distinguished from the rest of mankind by his superior virtue.

Whether we consider the greatness of its reputation, the number of its votaries, or the regularity of its system, the Valentinian heresy holds the most distinguished rank amongst those which pervaded this century. Its founder, Valentine, incensed at having been refused the rank of bishop, rejected orthodoxy, and taught his doctrines at Rome, whence they were diffused through Europe, Africa, and Asia. Refining upon the established genealogies of the Eons, he arranged and named them according to his own inventive imagination, and assigned to each his proper situation and employment. A system which consisted only of a certain arrangement of qualities or attributes which composed the Deity, and the inferior beings, admitted of considerable alterations according to the caprice of those by whom it was professed; and amongst the numerous disciples of Valentine there were few who contented themselves with the fancies which were already prepared for their reception.

Montanus, a native of Ardabon, in Mæsia, affected to believe himself the Paraclete or Comforter, and that he was sent to perfect the moral doctrines of Christ. He made a distinction between the Comforter promised by Christ to his apostles, and the Holy Spirit which was shed upon them on the day of Pentecost, and considered the former as a divine teacher, which character he himself assumed. He and his followers pretended to the gift of prophecy, and extraordinary illumination, and were distinguished by their extreme austerity. Not less averse to the arts which improve, than to the innocent enjoyments which embellish human life, Montanus anathematized all those sciences which have polished or entertained mankind. Not merely the male, but even the female disciples of this heretic pretended to the gifts of inspiration; amongst whom two ladies of distinguished quality resigned their husbands, and every delightful domestic connection, to preach in public according to the dictates of their prophetic spirit, which was generally exerted in denunciations of woe to the world, particularly to the Roman empire. The most celebrated of his disciples was the ingenious and learned, but austere and censorious, Tertullian.

Numerous were the different sects which arose in this century; but many of them had no other foundation than some variation from the heresies already noticed. Theodotus, a tanner, but a learned and ingenious man, asserted the simple humanity of Jesus Christ; whilst Praxeas, on the contrary, contended that

the union between God and Christ was so intimate, that the Supreme Being had suffered with him. The followers of Praxeas were, in consequence of this opinion, styled Patripassians.

It has been observed that, on the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the Jewish Christians retired to Pella, a small city of Syria. In this situation, interdicted, along with their brethren of the synagogue, from visiting the holy city, they languished during sixty years in absence from all which their strongest prejudices taught them the most fervently to revere. Wearied at length by the prohibition, which for ever deprived them of the chance of revisiting the object of their dearest hopes, they evaded the law by electing for their bishop, Mark, a prelate of the Gentile race, and abjuring the Mosaical law. Thus they obtained admission into the holy city, and the standard of orthodoxy was again erected at Jerusalem. During their occasional absence, the bishop and church of Pella had still retained the title belonging to their former situation. A considerable part, however, of the Jewish Christians, still more ardently attached to the Mosaical rites than to Jerusalem, remained behind, and some of them are supposed to have retained the name of Nazarenes, and others that of Ebionites, as described in the preceding century. Abhored and publicly execrated by their brethren of the circumcision for their attachment to Christianity, and despised by the Christians for their prejudices in favour of the Mosaical law, they were peculiarly oppressed and unfortunate.

Traces of this sect appeared so late as the fourth century; they were joined by the Elcesaites, an absurd sect, which grafted many opinions derived from the Oriental Philosophy on this mixture of Judaism and Christianity.

More considerable with respect to situation, to numbers, to rank and influence, than their predecessors, the Christians of the second century acquired an important station in the republic of letters, and diffused or defended the truths of Christianity in compositions, which, if not eminently correct, were rhetorical, and, if not peculiarly elegant, were learned, forcible, and manly.

Succeeding ages have beheld with veneration the spirit, integrity, and inartificial eloquence of Justin Martyr. This eminent person was born at Sichem, in Palestine; and after wandering in pursuit of truth through every known philosophical system, he at length embraced Christianity, and, without laying aside his philosopher's habit, taught the doctrines of the Gospel at Rome. His faith, as we have already seen, endured the severe test of persecution, and he received the crown of martyrdom at Rome.

Of the venerable and excellent Polycarp we have also already spoken. There is an epistle of his to the Philippians inserted



among those of the Apostolic Fathers. Its objects are to enforce the moral duties, and to controvert the opinions of the Gnostics. It is generally allowed to be genuine.

Irenæus, the disciple of the illustrious Polycarp, suffered martyrdom about the year 202. This pious and diligent prelate composed several works, of which, however, few remain. Some of the performances of Clement of Alexandria have reached posterity, from which we are justified in believing, that his erudition was very extensive, though he is frequently obscure. Hegesippus is placed by Eusebius in the time of Adrian. He was a Jewish convert, and wrote a continuation of the Acts of the Apostles.

The Old Testament was translated from the Hebrew into Greek during this century, by Aquila, a Jewish proselyte, by Theodotian, and by Symmachus, a native of Palestine, from whom the Nazarenes were frequently called Symmachians.

Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, wrote several epistles to the different Christian churches; but they are no longer extant. The same fate attended the voluminous works of Melito, bishop of Sardis. Three books against paganism, written by Theophilus the seventh bishop of Antioch, and which appear to have been intended as an introduction to a larger work, were more fortunate. Apolinaris, bishop of Hierapolis, also wrote in defence of the Christian religion. But a still more able defender was Athenagoras, an Athenian philosopher; whose Presbia (or mission) in favor of Christianity, addressed to Marcus Antoninus, is still read and admired.

The most voluminous Christian author at this period was Tertullian, who lived in the latter end of the second and the beginning of the third century. He was by birth a Carthaginian, and possessed all the constitutional fervor natural to the sons of the warm climate of Africa. Disgusted with some affronts he had met with from the ecclesiastics at Rome, and incited by his own vehement and rigid disposition, he embraced the opinions of Montanus, and attacked his adversaries with rather more warmth of temper than strength of argument. He was however learned, acute and ingenious; but severe, enthusiastical, and rather credulous.

Among the pagan writers of this century were Plutarch, Epictetus, Marcus Antoninus, and Lucian; the latter of whom, if he did not favor Christianity, was at least a sceptic with respect to the popular religion of his country. In this age, many of the Sibylline verses were probably forged.

## CHAPTER IV.

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### THE THIRD CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—DOCTRINE, GOVERNMENT, AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH DURING THE THIRD CENTURY.—OF THE SECTS WHICH APPEARED IN THE THIRD CENTURY.—OF LEARNING AND LEARNED MEN IN THE THIRD CENTURY.

Among several causes favorable to the diffusion of Christianity, we are, perhaps, not a little indebted to the quick succession of the Roman emperors. The events attending their lives, their deaths, and the artifices of their successors, to obtain the imperial purple, naturally engaged much of the public attention, and suspended the execution of those sanguinary edicts intended for the destruction of the Christians. Several among the masters of the Roman world were also entirely unconnected with their predecessors, unbiased by their prejudices, and adverse to their pursuits. In a race of princes, many of whom were accomplished, benevolent, candid, there could scarcely fail to be some who would respect the abilities and virtue even of the men whose religious opinions they did not approve.

A considerable part of the reign of Severus proved so far favorable to the Christians, that no additions were made to the severe edicts already in force against them. For this lenity they were probably indebted to Proculus, a Christian, who, in a very extraordinary manner, cured the emperor of a dangerous distemper by the application of oil. But this degree of peace, precarious as it was, and frequently interrupted by the partial execution of severe laws, was terminated by an edict which prohibited every subject of the empire, under severe penalties, from embracing the Jewish or Christian faith. This law appears, upon a first view, designed merely to impede the further progress of Christianity; but it incited the magistracy to enforce the laws of former emperors, which were still existing against the Christians, and during seven years they were exposed to a rigorous persecution in Palestine, Egypt, the rest of Africa, Italy, Gaul, and other parts. In this persecution Leonides the father of Or-



igen, and Irenæus bishop of Lyons, suffered martyrdom. On this occasion Tertullian composed his Apology.

The violence of Pagan intolerance was most severely felt in Egypt, and particularly at Alexandria; and among many instances of suffering virtue in that city, Eusebius relates one which is too extraordinary to be passed over in silence.

Pontamiæna, a woman not less distinguished for her chastity than for her beauty, which was exquisite, was condemned to suffer for her religion. To induce her to abjure her faith she was threatened with prostitution; but was protected from the insults of the mob by Basilides, a soldier to whose custody she was committed; and impressed with his kindness and humanity, she promised that after her death she would make intercession for his salvation. Pontamiana suffered the most cruel tortures, and with her mother Marcella was burned to death, boiling pitch being poured over their naked bodies. After some time the soldier Basilides was apprehended for not taking the military oath, which was considered by the Christians as an act of idolatry; and being questioned concerning the motives of his conversion, he replied that Pontamiæna had appeared to him in a dream, and had assured him that her prayers for his salvation were crowned with success, and that he would soon be called to enjoy the reward of his virtue. The beauty and interest of this narrative are not destroyed, even if we believe the dream of Basilides not to have been miraculous.

A still more shocking scene was acted in another part of Africa. Four young men and two women were apprehended as Christians, and condemned to die. One of the latter, Ubea Perpetua, a young widow of a good family, had a child at her breast; and the other, Felicitas, was brought to bed in prison only three days before her execution. They were, as usual, thrown to the wild beasts; and the two females in particular, after being tossed by a wild cow and horribly mangled, while the milk was flowing from their breasts, expired with the greatest resignation and the most heroic fortitude.

The interval between the death of Severus and the time when Maximin assumed the imperial purple, was a season peculiarly favorable to the Christians. They publicly appeared at court, and composed a considerable part of the household and favorites of the amiable Alexander, being protected by Mammaea his mother. The severities they endured from his successor Maximin, were probably to be ascribed more to his displeasure at their attachment to the former emperor, and their having been protected by him, than to their religious principles. From the reign of Maximin to that of Decius, the Christians enjoyed still more favor than they had ever before experienced. The

emperor Philip, stepping beyond the bounds observed by Alexander, who had paid divine honors to Christ, and had placed his statue or picture along with those of Abraham and Orpheus, in his domestic chapel, was so strongly and openly attached to them, as to have given occasion to the belief that he had fully conformed to the doctrines of the Gospel, and had consented to make an humble avowal of his former guilt, and secretly to implore permission to enter the threshold of the sanctuary. That these opinions were fallacious is in the highest degree probable; but thus much may reasonably be deduced from them, that the clemency of the emperor must have been extremely favorable to the reception of Christianity amongst his subjects, and that the doctrines of the Gospel would probably be embraced by many timid but honest minds, whom the dread of a persecuting tyrant would have prevented from making an open profession of their faith in Christ. The accession of Decius to the imperial throne fatally terminated this state of security and peace; and, during his short reign, the Christians were exposed to greater calamities than any they had hitherto suffered. Considerable numbers were publicly destroyed, several purchased safety by bribes, or secured it by flight; and many deserted from the faith, and willingly consented to burn incense on the altars of the gods. The city of Alexandria, the great theatre of persecution, had even anticipated the edicts of the emperor, and had put to death a number of innocent persons, among whom were some women. The imperial edict for persecuting the Christians was published in the year 249; and shortly after Fabianus bishop of Rome, with a number of his followers, was put to death. The venerable bishops of Jerusalem and Antioch died in prison; the most cruel tortures were employed, and the numbers that perished are by all parties confessed to have been very considerable. Gallus the successor of the inhuman Decius, continued, during his transient reign of not quite two years, the severities practised by his predecessor.

In 253 Gallus was killed by his soldiers, and was succeeded for a short time by Emilian, who was also soon massacred, and Valerian chosen in his room. The first years of Valerian were favorable to the Christians; but the emperor was afterwards made the dupe of Macrinus, a magician; and in the year 257 issued severe edicts against the Christians, and numbers were sacrificed in different modes—some were scourged to death, some burnt, and many perished by the sword. In 260 Valerian was taken prisoner by the Persians, and from that period the tranquility of the church was scarcely interrupted during the remainder of the century.

In the history of the preceeding century the creed of Saint



Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, which he affirms to have been the general creed of the Christian church, was distinctly detailed. The creed which Tertullian gives as the system of belief in his time corresponds in most respects with that of Irenæus; and it must have been composed at the farthest about the beginning of this century.

“We believe,” says the father, “in one God, but under this dispensation (which we call Oikonomian,) that to the one God there is a Son, his Word, who proceeded from him, by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing was made. He, sent by the Father to a virgin, and born of her, became man and God, the Son of man, and the Son of God, and was named Jesus Christ. We believe that he suffered, was dead and buried, according to the Scriptures, and being raised by the Father, and taken up into heaven, that he sits at the right hand of the Father, and shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead. Who sent, according to his promise from the Father, the Holy Ghost, the comforter, the sanctifier of the faith of those who believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

The opinions of the Platonic Christians, that the Scriptures were not to be understood according to their literal, but agreeably to their allegorical sense, had at this time deeply pervaded the Christian world. The plainest precepts of the Gospel were supposed to contain some latent meaning, and ample scope was opened to the most absurd and chimerical interpretations. With the opinions, the Christian teachers had adopted the habits and manners of the philosophic school. They assumed the dress of the pompous sophist, and delivered the plain doctrines of the Gospel with strained and studied eloquence. The belief that solitude, contemplation, and abstinence were necessary to elevate the soul to a knowledge of divine truth, was derived from this philosophy, and was earnestly inculcated during this century. One of the first instances which we find recorded of these voluntary seclusions from the common affairs of life, is that of Paul, who retired from the Decian persecution to the deserts of Thebais, where he resided ninety years. His example was not, however, a solitary proof of human folly; many others retired to forests, to caverns, and to dens, where they practised in solitude the most severe discipline, and made pretences, not only to extraordinary devotion, but to extraordinary illumination; and a voluntary seclusion from secular affairs was commonly inculcated as the perfection of piety and virtue. Anthony, whose eventful, if not miraculous life, has been recorded by the pen of Athanasius, retired at a very early age into the Egyptian deserts; and the respect which was paid to his character, and

his wonderful relations, greatly contributed to extend the ardour for retirement.

Some new doctrines concerning the state of the soul after death appear to have made a considerable progress during this century. The undistinguished believer was consigned to purification, and the expiation of his sins in a state after this life, and anterior to his participation of the joys of heaven; but the martyrs were supposed to be received to eternal glory immediately upon the dissolution of the body. The annual commemoration of their sufferings and victory was solemnly and fervently observed in the church. In compliance with the superstitions of their pagan brethren, and with a view to recommend themselves to their favor, the Christians appointed the celebration of these anniversaries on the days appropriated to Pagan festivals, and introduced into them whatever might captivate the fancy, and recommend these rites to their heathen neighbors.

We have beheld the Christians during the two preceding centuries, compelled to assembled in the houses, perhaps, of some of the more opulent of their society, or in some secret and sequestered retreat. In the third century, their appearance became more respectable, and they were either permitted to erect, or connived at in erecting, convenient edifices for religious worship. This season of external prosperity was improved by the ministers of the church, for the exertion of new claims, and the assumption of powers, with which they had not been previously invested. At first these claims were modestly urged, and gradually allowed; but they laid a foundation for the encroachments which were afterwards made upon the rights of the whole Christian community, and for lofty pretensions to the right of supremacy and spiritual dominion. Those lands which were purchased from the common stock for the benefit of the whole, were in time considered as the exclusive property of the clergy, whose rights were represented as superior to the claims of earthly potentates, since they were derived from Heaven, and entailed upon the ministers of religion as the successors of the holy Apostles, and of the Jewish priesthood.

Several alterations in the form of church government appear to have been introduced during the third century. Some degree of pomp was thought necessary to render so singular an institution respectable to the minds of a gross multitude, who are only capable of judging from external appearances. An attention to this circumstance was probably one amongst many causes for appointing new orders of ministers in the church; but Christian societies were not destitute of more cogent reasons. As their numbers increased, their labors became pro-



portionably greater; and it was necessary to provide assistance, and, more agreeable to good order, to assign to each his proper function. Inferior ministers were therefore instituted, who derived their appellations from the offices they fulfilled. The *Copiatæ* or *Fossarii* provided for the decent interment of the dead. The *Parabolani* attended the sick, particularly in infectious or pestilential diseases. The *Acolythists* were employed in lighting the candles of the church, and attending the ministers during the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and to the *Exorcists* was assigned the office of praying over possessed persons at such times as no public intercession was made for them; and while they relieved the bodily wants of the miserable sufferer, whose chief residence was in the church, they relaxed his mind by leading him to some useful or innocent employment. The *Notaries* were appointed to record every remarkable occurrence relating to the society of which they were members. The institution of this order is ascribed to Fabian at Rome, under the Decian persecution, at which time they were employed to collect the actions and memorials of the martyrs. These ministers probably derived their emoluments, not merely from the precarious bounty of the society, but from a certain proportion of the fixed revenues of the church. The principal of them (no longer obliged to depend upon an uncertain subsistence, which was augmented or diminished according to the zeal or opulence of the community) had obtained, before the close of this century, the possession of several considerable estates, which had been bequeathed or presented to the church.

The external dignity of the ministers of religion was accompanied by a still greater change in its discipline. The simple rules prescribed by the apostles for the preservation of good order in the church, branched out into so many luxuriant shoots, that it was difficult to recognize the parent stem. In many societies, all persons unbaptized or excommunicated were considered as out of the reach of salvation. Nor was the sacrament of baptism administered to any till the humble Catechumen had been publicly exorcised, had acknowledge himself under the influence of a malignant spirit, and had submitted to a long preparation. He was then, in the presence of those already initiated, publicly admitted into the church. This rite was performed in a mode extremely different from that which had been adopted in the two preceding centuries. As the number of converts to Christianity increased, the older Christians, in order more effectually to judge of the religious knowledge of those whom they admitted to communion, very judiciously lengthened their season of probation. Their dur-

ation of this time differed in different places, and according to the circumstances of the probationers, who, in cases of extreme sickness, or the general conversion of a whole nation, were immediately admitted to baptism. In general, however, a sufficient time was allowed for instructing the Catechumens in the doctrines of religion, who were arranged in different classes, in proportion to the time they had passed in probation, or the progress they had made in religious attainments. The immediate candidates for baptism registered their own names with those of their sponsors in the public dypticks (or registers) of the church, after which they were examined respecting their qualifications. These regulations, which were eminently calculated to exclude unworthy members, were however accompanied by some observances highly fantastical and absurd. The Catechumen was exorcised for twenty days previous to his baptism, in order to deliver him from the supposed dominion of evil spirits, and during that time was prepared by abstinence, the knowledge of the Lord's prayer, and the Articles of Belief, for becoming a member of the church. In imitation of the Pagans, the Christians had thought proper to introduce mysteries into the religion of Christ, and the administration of baptism, confirmation, ordination, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the Lord's Prayer, and a number of other offices, were industriously concealed from the Catechumen. The candidates for baptism were divided into classes; one class was permitted to hear the sermon, but not the prayers of the church; another was allowed to be auditors of the prayers offered for themselves; a third was admitted to hear the prayers for themselves, and the Energumens (or Demoniacs,) and then formally dismissed. The Catechumen not only promised, by himself or by his sponsors, to renounce Satan and all his works, but accompanied this renunciation by some action expressing his abhorrence to the Devil; sometimes by stretching out his hands, as if to compel his departure, and sometimes by an exsufflation, or spitting, in order to intimate his abhorrence. In the performance of these rights, the face of the actor was directed towards the west, which was considered as the abode of darkness and the emblem of the Devil; while the east was regarded as the region of light, and the rising sun as a symbol of the Sun of Righteousness. This renunciation was succeeded by turning the face to the east, and making a vow to act in conformity to the profession of Christianity, a public confession of faith. Each of these ceremonies was repeated three times. Confirmation immediately followed the reception of baptism. This ceremony consisted in anointing them with holy oil and the imposition of hands; the former of which practices



was probably introduced about the beginning of this century; and to this unction was ascribed the effect of confirming the soul in all spiritual graces on the part of God, and the confirmation of the profession of a Christian on the part of man. The invocation of the Spirit in this rite was conceived to add wisdom and strength, to establish men in innocence, as the new birth of baptism imparted innocence and forgiveness of sin. White garments were distributed to the Neophytes upon their being baptised, which after being worn eight days were deposited in the church. The believer, who by this rite became incorporated into the society of Christians, was congratulated upon his admission with the kiss of peace, and was presented with a mixture of milk and honey, or milk and wine. After a few other trifling ceremonies, he was permitted to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which began in several of the more opulent societies to be administered with much external pomp. The excessive respect which was paid to baptismal rites was still further augmented by the disputes which arose concerning it during this century, in which the necessity of re-baptizing heretics, who, after their defection, sought for re-admission into the Church, was strongly contended for, and occasioned the convention of several councils, the decrees of which were issued according to the prevailing disposition of the presiding members.

A regular form of discipline began to take place during the third century in every matter which fell within the cognizance of the Church. At this time the penitents appear to have been divided into classes; the first of which were the *Flentes* or Mourners, who were stationed in the avenues to the church, where, in a prostrate posture, they supplicated for permission to perform public penance. After obtaining this request, they received the title of *Audientes* or Hearers, and had the privilege of entering the church, and of hearing the scriptures and the sermon. The third order were denominated *Genuflectentes* or Kneelers, were allowed to unite in the prayers offered on their account, and stationed in the nave of the church, where they received the benediction of the bishop. The last order was that of the *Consistentes* or By-standers, who were allowed, along with their less guilty brethren, to approach the altar, to join in the common prayer, and be present at the oblations; but they were excluded from a participation of the Lord's Supper. During the season of penitence, the offenders were compelled to appear in sackcloth, or sackcloth and ashes; and in some churches, the men were obliged to shave their heads, and the women to wear a veil, and either to cut off their hair, or wear it in a dishevelled manner, as a token of dejection and repent-

ance. The time which was appointed for penitence was protracted or extended by the bishop, according to the marks of contrition which were distinguished in the penitent, and this was called an *indulgence*. He was invested also with authority to alter the nature of the penance. At the close of the Decian persecution, the doors of the church were crowded by suppliants, who, to secure their lives, had consented either to make a tacit renunciation of their faith, by purchasing testimonials, from the magistrates of their adherence to paganism and retiring from observation; or who had reluctantly consented to burn incense, or to offer sacrifice upon the altars of the gods. These opostates were called *Libellatici*, *Thurificati*, and *Sacrificati*. Their success was various; to some the gates of reconciliation were at once opened: against others they were securely closed, and that not always in proportion to the guilt of the offender, but to the accustomed lenity or rigour of the church to which he belonged. A spirited and rigorous controversy arose on this occasion, particularly in Africa, in which the eloquence and the ardour of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, at length prevailed; and it was enacted that those who had obtained testimonials from the magistrates, of having offered adoration to the gods of the empire, should be admitted to a reconciliation with the Church; but that such as had publicly burnt incense should remain in penance, and should not be restored to communion, unless they were in danger of death, and had commenced penitents previous to their sickness. A sentence scarcely less rigid was pronounced against the ecclesiastic who had lapsed into idolatry: he was indeed admitted to hope that in time he might be received into communion with the Church, but he was for ever excluded from all clerical honors. It was, indeed, highly necessary to exhibit such a picture of severity in the Church, and of contrition in the offender, as might effectually deter his brethren from pursuing his footsteps.

The Apostolical Lent we have already seen was observed only a few days before Easter. In the course of the third century, it extended at Rome to three weeks. It did not stop here: before the middle of the succeeding age, it was prolonged to six weeks, and then began to be called *Quadragesima*, or forty days fast. About the time of the Council of Eliberis, Saturday was observed as a day for keeping the lesser fast in some of the western churches, and three days of abstinence were observed in the week. In time, however, the fast on Saturday was observed with greater strictness, and that on Wednesday was wholly disregarded. On the days of humiliation it was customary to pray in a kneeling posture, contrary to the practice of offering their devotions standing, which was



usual at those periods when any joyful event was commemorated, or any festival observed. The increasing passion for austerities, which during this century was so observable, must be ascribed to the increasing belief in the power of malignant spirits, who were supposed to be continually inciting men to the commission of evil, and whose influence was thought to be considerably diminished by abstinence and mortification.

This opinion may easily be traced into the Gnostic philosophy, which insensibly became interwoven with the doctrines of Christianity; but a great number of those rites which were introduced into the discipline of the Church, can only be considered as an accommodation to Paganism. It would be extremely uncandid to suppose, that in the adaptation of these rites, those by whom they were introduced saw the extent to which they would afterwards proceed, or conceived the vast accessions of power and wealth which would accrue from them to the rulers of the Church. Matters apparently trifling in themselves might with propriety be conceded to the prejudices of the multitude, and to the intention of making Christianity more acceptable to the new converts. Many of the Jewish and Pagan proselytes, who were really convinced of the truths of the Gospel, languished in the absence of ceremonies which are naturally adapted to the taste of the unreflecting multitude, while the insolent infidel haughtily insisted upon the inanity of a religion which was not manifested by an external symbol or decoration. In order to accommodate Christianity to these prejudices, a number of rites were instituted; and while the dignified titles of the Jewish priesthood were, through a compliance with the prejudices of that people, conferred upon the Christian teachers, many ceremonies were introduced which coincided with the genius of Paganism. The truths of the Gospel were taught by sensible images, and many of the ceremonies employed in celebrating the heathen mysteries were observed in the institutions of Christ, which soon, in their turn, obtained the name of mysteries, and served as a melancholy precedent for future innovations, and as a foundation for that structure of absurdity and superstition which deformed and disgraced the church.

The catalogue of heresiarchs during the third century is not so extensive as that in the age preceding; but the absurdity of the doctrines promulgated, and the numbers by whom they were received, are at least equally remarkable. In detailing the history of men whose writings the ill judged piety of their own or succeeding ages has destroyed, and consequently whose opinions and characters have only reached posterity from the

suspicious representations of their antagonists, we must however hesitate; and we are bound to weigh every existing evidence before we pronounce a sentence of condemnation. That many absurd tenets were propagated, and that these were departures from the true faith, we have the most undoubted authority for believing; but when we perceive so many seceders from the Church, while they professed themselves the followers of the pure Gospel of Christ, conceiving themselves warranted in the most impious and profligate conduct, we cannot but regard them as under a mental derangement, and therefore rather objects of compassion than condemnation; unless we admit that their tenets have been misrepresented, or at least exaggerated.

The doctrines of self-indulgence have been ascribed as fundamental errors to few or none of the sectaries who arose in the third century. Their manners were in general austere, and their hopes of future happiness greatly dependant upon their rejection of present gratification. Every incitement of pleasure was to be contemned; every allurements of sense was to be avoided and abhorred. One of the most celebrated sectaries of this period was Manes, by birth a Chaldaean, and eminent for his learning, genius, and accomplishments. He was ordained at an early age a presbyter in the Christian Church; and uniting his philosophical doctrines with Christianity, he formed a system compounded of both, which he conceived would meet with a ready acceptance both from the Persian Infidels and the Christians. His success at first was, however, by no means adequate to his expectations. The Persian Christians, offended by his heretical opinions, excommunicated him from the Church: and the Magi were incensed at his attempt to reform the doctrines of Zoroaster. But notwithstanding this opposition, his opinions were received by considerable numbers in Persia, Syria, Greece, Africa, and Spain. They were indeed so artfully incorporated with the fantastical opinions of several other sectaries, that they found large parties by whom they were at once approved, and afterwards embraced. Manes adopted the mystical language of the Magi, and taught the Gnostic doctrine of two *principles*; the former of which was a living, immaterial *Light*, existing from all eternity, and surrounded by hosts of pure and immortal spirits, the emanations of his essence; the latter an evil power, called *Darkness*, who had resided from eternity in a remote region of infinite space, accompanied by myriads of evil spirits, created out of matter, of which his kingdom was composed. This heresiarch contended that there was a time when these different powers were unacquainted with each others existence; but



that the rebellious powers of Darkness had, during a sedition in their own regions, advanced beyond their own limits, and, on beholding the delightful realms of Light, had projected an irruption into this kingdom. God had opposed to these turbulent spirits the *first man*; but his opposition being too feeble, he had sent to his aid the *living spirit*; a part of the celestial substance however being seized by the demons, light and darkness became blended. From this mixture, which was permitted by the Supreme Being, the living spirit separated those parts of the celestial substance which were uncontaminated with matter, and composed from them the sun and moon; and from those parts which were corrupted only in a small degree, formed the planets. The remainder composed this world, where good and evil are ever blended, and incorporated, and which is fitted for the residence of those bodies that were formed by the defeated prince of Darkness, and endued with a soul composed of those parts of the celestial substance which he had seized. These beings are continually obstructed in their endeavors to be virtuous, by other beings created by the same hand, but containing souls formed from corrupt matter.

This fanciful system was the foundation on which Manes erected a further superstructure. He asserted, that in order to obviate the power of those malevolent spirits who sought the destruction of virtue, the Supreme Being had produced two superior emanations, the Son and the Holy Ghost, consubstantial with the Father, but subordinate to him, the former of whom resides in the sun and moon, the other in the air; where they exert their benign influences upon the bodies and souls of men; but that God sent good angels and prophets upon earth to instruct man, and at length his own Son, who took upon him the exterior, not the nature of man. That he instructed men in their true origin, the causes of their captivity, and the means of deliverance; showed them, by his mystical resurrection and ascension, that death destroys not the man, but restores to punished souls the liberty of returning to their heavenly country. That after death the soul passed into other bodies, till they were either sufficiently purified to pass to the moon, whence after a certain lustration they were conveyed for farther purification to the sun; or else they were delivered to the demons of the air, by whom they were severely chastised, and then were sent to animate other bodies. That when all the parts of celestial substance shall be disengaged from matter, a devouring fire shall burst forth; the earth shall be cast into utter darkness, where the devils shall dwell for ever, con-

finished with the souls whose indolence has prevented their purification.

Austerity and mortification were the leading features in the characters of the Manichæans. The ecclesiastics and the perfect were strictly prohibited from marriage, and confined solely to the enjoyment of spiritual delights. Every severity which could extenuate and mortify the body was required from all. The fanciful inventor of these fables, after various vicissitudes, is said to have been condemned to a cruel and ignominious death, by the command of the Persian king.

The sects which were founded by Noëtus and Sabellius, during this century, have been frequently considered as much alike in their tenets, and the followers of each have been distinguished by the name of Patripassians: but the two sects differed in several important articles. Noëtus asserted that the Father had united himself with the man Christ, and was born and crucified with him; while Sabellius maintained, that the Word and the Holy Spirit were only emanations of the Deity; and that the former was united to the Son of God, the man Jesus; and that, having in him accomplished the salvation of man, he had diffused himself on the Apostles in tongues of fire, and was then called the Holy Ghost. Noëtus was excommunicated and condemned in the council of Asia.

Though the heresy of Paul of Samosata, the metropolitan of Antioch, appears to have been received by considerably fewer numbers than the opinions of many of the other sectaries; yet the distinguished rank of this heresiarch, and the vigorous opposition which he made to the decrees of those Councils by which he was deposed, attracted general attention. He asserted the simple humanity of Christ: but maintained, that the wisdom or Spirit of the Father had descended upon him, dwelt within him, and empowered him to work miracles and instruct mankind. The splendor of this prelate's appearance vied with that of a monarch: and the levity of his manners; it is said, his ambition, and the arrogance with which he propagated his opinions, were as generally detested as the doctrines which he taught. Several councils were convened on this occasion, and by their decrees Paul was degraded from the episcopal dignity; but under the protection of the queen of Antioch, he continued to enjoy the emoluments of his station during four years. It is certainly to the credit of Paul to have possessed the patronage and favor of so distinguished a character. The court of Palmyra was the resort of all the learned; and is consecrated to the latest ages by the presence of the incomparable Longinus, who possibly might imbibe his taste for the Hebrew and



Christian writers from the conversation of this distinguished sectary. The defeat of Zenobia was, however, a prelude to that of Paul. The contending parties agreed to submit the decision of their cause to the emperor Aurelian, by whose sentence the rebellious prelate was deposed. The separatists who followed Paul assumed the appellation of Paulians, or Paulianists.

The followers of Novation, a presbyter of the Church of Rome; and of Novatus, a presbyter of Carthage, were distinguished merely by their discipline; for their religious and doctrinal tenets do not appear to be at all different from those of the Church. They condemned second marriages, and for ever excluded from their communion all those who after baptism had fallen into this sin. They affected very superior purity; and though they conceived a sinner might possibly hope for eternal life, they absolutely refused to re-admit into their communion any who had lapsed into sin, and separated from the Church of Rome, because the members of it had admitted into their communion, many who had during a season of persecution rejected the Christian faith.

The industry, the erudition, and the accomplishments of Origen justly entitle him to the most distinguished place amongst the Christian writers of the third century. His attention to the Sacred Scriptures was early and indefatigable; but though the principal, they were not the only objects of his studies; he was conversant in philosophy and polite literature, published several doctrinal and moral treatises, and entered the field of controversy with vigor and success. The number of his literary performances exceeds that of any other Christian writer in the early ages, and is indeed very considerable. He composed Commentaries, Scholia, and Homilies upon the Bible, parts of which still exist; treatises upon prayer, and on the principles of religion; and eight books in defence of Christianity against the attacks of Celsus, which are still extant, and are invaluable. His Hexapla was a performance of perhaps more utility than labor: it consisted in placing the Greek versions of the Septuagint, of Symmachus, and of Theodotion, against the text in the Hebrew. His greatest work was, however, the conquest of every corrupt propensity. His virtue, his humility, and his amiable manners, together with his eminent abilities, have for ever secured to him the veneration and regard of posterity, though they were insufficient to preserve him from the hatred and calumnies of his contemporaries.

Of such men, every action of their lives, every circumstance in which they are concerned, is interesting. The self-denial so remarkable in Origen, throughout the whole of his life, was

observable at a very early period. His father suffered martyrdom under Severus; and the entreaties and even compulsion of his mother were barely sufficient to prevent her son, who was then only a youth of seventeen, from suffering in the same cause. When prevented, he wrote to his father, earnestly exhorting him to persevere in his faith, and cautioning him against the entreaties of his adversaries, though the support of his wife and seven children depended upon his life. His zeal for the truth appears to have been unaffected and unvarying, and the whole of his life to have been employed for the promotion of virtue. Much of it was passed in indigence; and though his virtues had attracted the notice of Mammaea, the mother of the Emperor, he died destitute of common conveniences. His early station was that of a teacher of grammar; he was then chosen to fill the chair of the Alexandrian School, and contributed in a high degree to extend the reputation of that seminary. He was not, however, suffered to enjoy his situation in tranquility: he incurred perhaps the envy, certainly the resentment, of Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, by whom he was excommunicated, expelled from his home, and deprived of his rank as presbyter. His active endeavors to promote Christianity rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to the Pagans; in the Decian persecution he endured imprisonment, torture, and chains. He was at length delivered from persecution, and died under the reign of Gallus.

The character of Origen, though uncommonly exalted and amiable, was not without a few dark shades. Charmed with the subtleties of the Platonic Philosophy, he blended it with Christianity; and maintained that the Scriptures were not to be literally, and allegorically explained. The celebrity of Origen, which continually increased, extended this mode of explanation to perhaps a culpable excess, till it became almost general. Charitable and generous to others, his rigor and self-denial were likewise carried to an extreme which proved prejudicial to his constitution, and which sometimes extended to absurdity.

Cyprian, who in the year 248 attained the episcopal See of Carthage, acquired a degree of admiration and applause from his contemporaries, which has not been denied to him by posterity. Affable, virtuous, and charitable in his private character, he was zealous, spirited, and active in his public station, and possessed all those qualities which are calculated to attach friends, and excite the jealousy of adversaries. He had attained to manhood, and been some years a teacher of rhetoric, before he embraced Christianity; and his conversion from Paganism, and zeal for Christianity, had made him so highly



obnoxious to the people, that in the Decian persecution he was repeatedly demanded by them; and must have been sacrificed to their resentment, had he not secured his safety by a prudent retreat. In this concealment, impervious to all but a few of his faithful friends, he contrived to regulate all the affairs of his church, to which he returned at the close of the persecution. He then entered into a spirited controversy with Stephen, bishop of Rome, concerning the propriety of re-baptizing heretics. The haughty prelate insisted with extreme arrogance, that baptism administered by those who had seceded from the Church was perfectly valid; but he was resolutely opposed by the inflexible Cyprian, who asserted, on the contrary, that baptism performed by heretics was null. How far each party was right in this question, it is not the object of the present work to determine. The conduct of Stephen during the time of its being agitated, was, however, extremely insolent. The severe edicts of Valerian, which were particularly directed against the ministers of the Christian Church, were fatal to the devoted Cyprian: he was first banished to Birta, where he resided some time, and in the following year was recalled to Carthage, where he was confined to the narrow limits of his own garden. Still inflexible in the faith, he refused to purchase life by sacrificing to the heathen gods. He was then condemned to be beheaded; and the cheerful piety with which he encountered death, together with the virtues of his life, occasioned a general lamentation for him, both among his Christian and Pagan contemporaries. Many of his literary performances related to the discipline of the Church, and are, together with a considerable number of moral and theological treatises, composed in a style uncommonly animated and pious. His desire of being rhetorical has, however, and with some reason, subjected him to the charge of turgidity.

Gregory, bishop of Neocesarea, and Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, were both disciples of Origen, and each of them among the number of those who retired from the Decian persecution. The miracles which were ascribed to Gregory, and which obtained for him the surname of *Thaumaturgus*, have bestowed upon him a degree of celebrity which he would never have derived from his few literary productions. Those fragments which remain of the works of Dionysius, are not without a considerable degree of ingenuity and learning; they are chiefly controversial, or relating to discipline. The literary abilities of Methodius, bishop of Tyre are principally remarkable from the celebrity of his antagonist, the learned and sophistical Porphyry, a Syrian, of the school of Ammonius, who attacked the doctrines of Christianity in a voluminous and

elaborate work, which was destroyed by an edict of the Emperor in the following century. Amongst the lesser writers were Serapion, bishop of Antioch, Minucius Felix, who openly attacked Paganism, and Julius Africanus, a man not destitute of erudition; but the greater part of whose performances are lost. Copies of the Septuagint were diligently corrected by several different writers, possessed of abilities very adequate to their task: amongst these were Hesychius, the martyrs Lucian and Pamphilus, and Picrius, who obtained the name of the younger Origen.

The Apostolical Canons and Constitutions, works which it has been pretended were composed by the Twelve Apostles conjointly with St. Paul, and copied by Clemens, who acted as amanuensis upon the occasion, have been supposed by some ingenious critics to have been fabricated in the third or fourth century. They effect to establish several points relative to discipline, which were not mentioned in the New Testament. The Constitutions appear to be a compilation of old treatises, which convert Christianity into a mere ceremonial law. The eighth book has been ascribed to Hippolitus, an Arabian bishop, who composed a work called *The Apostolical Tradition concerning Ecclesiastical Offices*, and who has been supposed the compiler of the Constitutions which he published at Rome. The honor of this imposture has not, however, remained with the good prelate, but has been bestowed upon many.

Amongst the profane authors of the third century, Longinus the rhetorician, and the historian Dion Cassius, are justly entitled to the most distinguished rank.



## CHAPTER V.

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### THE FOURTH CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT, DOCTRINE, RITES, AND CEREMONIES, IN THE FOURTH CENTURY.—OF THE SECTS WHICH APPEARED IN THE FOURTH CENTURY.—OF LEARNING AND LEARNED MEN IN THE FOURTH CENTURY.

THE events of the fourth century hold a distinguished rank in the annals of the Christian faith. During this period the truths of the Gospel were publicly received, and professed by a succession of the great masters of the Roman world. Christianity became the established religion of the empire; and, in consequence of the contest between the Orthodox and Arian parties, the primitive faith of the Church was nicely ascertained, and delivered to posterity in precise and determinate term. No longer abandoned to the suggestions of fancy, the Christian professor was expected to conform to that rule of faith prescribed by the great leaders of the Church, or compelled to relinquish his title of an orthodox believer in Christ.

The tranquility which, after the Decian persecution, had with little interruption soothed and recruited the Church, continued during eighteen years of the reign of Diocletian, who assumed the imperial purple in the year 284. In this prosperous season, the Christians publicly professed their religious sentiments, and were joined by numbers so considerable, as to require an addition of several more edifices for the performance of public worship.

But this halcyon calm was rudely interrupted. Gallorius Cæsar, whose hatred to the Christians had already been manifested by his requisition that they should renounce either their religion or his service, had the address, by fictitious oracles, to terrify and irritate the timid and credulous mind of the Emperor against his Christian subjects. Returning victorious from the Persian war, he urged his importunities with accu-

mulated force; and after spending a winter at Nicomedia with Diocletian, in which the extermination of the Christians was the object of their consultation, he obtained an edict, enjoining that the churches and writings of the Christians should be destroyed; all their civil rights and privileges annulled; and that no pretence nor rank, however exalted, should be sufficient to excuse them from punishment. The day previous to the appearance of this edict, the persecution commenced by the demolition of the principal church, which in a few hours was raised to the ground. Alarmed and irritated at these proceedings, the edict, which was placed in the most conspicuous part of the city, was instantly destroyed by a Christian, who paid for his temerity by being roasted alive. Gallorius, whose rancor to the Christians could be gratified by nothing short of their total extirpation, and whose short-sighted policy did not enable him to perceive that slower and more insidious measures were more calculated to undermine the constancy of the Christians, and destroy their cause, than those violent methods which animated them to action and resistance, had recourse to new projects. A dreadful fire, which raged in the imperial palace, was attributed to the Christians, who (in order to produce a confession of their guilt) were destroyed in considerable numbers, with every refinement of torture which cruelty could suggest. Some were broiled to death on gridirons, after being cruelly scourged, and their wounds washed with brine; others were thrown to wild beasts, and others starved to death. The effort was, however, ineffectual; and amongst the various causes assigned for this conflagration, perhaps the most probable is, that it was the act of the crafty and sanguinary Gallorius.

This catastrophe was succeeded by numerous edicts against the Christians; and a furious persecution raged throughout the empire, except in the provinces of Gaul, under the government of Constantius, the father of Constantine, who protected their persons, though he permitted the demolition of their churches. During a series of years these sanguinary edicts were enforced or suspended according to the caprice of the several masters of the Roman world, or as their recess from the public concerns of an empire distracted by civil commotions afforded them leisure. Great numbers of the Christians suffered the severest tortures in this persecution; though the accounts given of it by succeeding historians are probably exaggerated. There is, however, sufficient of well authenticated facts, to assure us amply of the cruel and intolerant disposition of the professors of pagan philosophy. The human imaginations was indeed almost exhausted in inventing a variety of tortures. Some were impaled alive; others had their limbs broken, and in that con-



dition were left to expire. Some were roasted by slow fires; and some suspended by the feet with their heads downward, and a fire being made under them, were suffocated by the smoke. Some had melted lead poured down their throats, and the flesh of some was torn off with shells; and others had splinters of reeds thrust under the nails of their fingers and toes. The few who were not capitally punished, had their limbs and their features mutilated. It would be endless to enumerate the victims of superstition. The bishops of Nicomedia, of Tyre, of Sidon, of Emesa; several matrons and virgins of the purest characters, and a nameless multitude of plebians, arrived at immortality through the flames of martyrdom.

Wearied at length with contention, or moved by the excruciating anguish he himself suffered from the dreadful and loathsome disease, Galerius indulged his Christian subjects in a transient respite from their sufferings; which were, however, renewed by his successors, and continued, though with some intermission and mitigation, till the year 325, which restored tranquility to the Church, and invested Constantine with the sole dominion of the Roman world.

It is well known that Diocletian, as well as his coadjutor in the empire Maximian, abdicated the empire. This transaction was succeeded by eighteen years of discord and confusion, and the Roman world at one period was administered by six emperors. The rival princes, however, gradually fell before the united arms and superior fortune of Constantine and Licinius; and the former, impatient of a partner in the throne, turned at length his arms against the unfortunate Licinius, who was the last competitor that opposed his greatness; and the last captive that adorned his triumph.

No character has been exhibited to posterity in lights more contradictory and irreconcilable than that of Constantine, Christian writers, transported with his profession of their faith, have perhaps magnified his abilities and virtues to excess, and thrown an almost celestial splendor over every part of the portrait; while the Pagan historians have spread their gloomy shades upon the canvas, and obscured every trait that was great and amiable.

The precise date of the conversion of Constantine is, by the disagreement of the respective historians of that period, involved in considerable difficulties. The miraculous circumstances with which it was said to have been accompanied, are attended with some doubts to a sceptical mind. His father, Constantius, had shown himself very favorably disposed to the Christian cause, and Constantine gave early indications of

a desire to protect and favor its professors. In the commencement of his reign he granted free toleration in religious concerns to all the subjects of his empire, and a full restitution was commanded to be made to the Christians; but at the same time he liberally enriched the temples of the gods, and publicly worshipped at their shrines. A luminous cross inscribed with the words *By this conquer*, which, when Constantine was about to engage Maxentius, (one of the rival emperors,) was seen in the air by the Emperor and his assembled army; and a dream, in which the author of our religion appeared to confirm the prognostic of the luminous phenomenon, have been generally considered as the causes of his conversion; but it has been objected, that after the date of this event, Polytheism was equally with the Gospel of Christ protected by the master of the Roman world. Great efforts, indeed, and extraordinary abilities, are necessary to throw off at once opinions which have been sanctioned by long use and early prejudices. The political situation however of Constantine was probably not such, while he was shackled with conjutors, and laboring up the steep of ambition to the summit of human authority, to enable him to make an open profession of his conversion. Of the sincerity of his attachment to the religion of the Gospel there cannot be a doubt, since it even degenerated into superstition. His temper indeed was naturally mild and tolerant; and if he embraced Christianity with the true spirit of the Gospel, his not persecuting the Pagans is the worst argument that could be produced to prove the insincerity of his conversion.

So early as the year 313, an edict was issued from Milan by the joint emperors Constantine and Licinius which may be considered as highly favorable to the Christians, since it authorised every subject of the empire to profess either Christianity or Paganism unmolested; it also secured the places of Christian worship, and even directed the restoration of whatever property they had been dispossessed of by the late persecution. The abdication and death of his colleague, which left Constantine in the undisturbed possession of the dominions of Rome, was soon followed by circular letters from the Emperor to all his subjects, exhorting them to an immediate imitation of the examples of their sovereign, who had embraced the divine truths of the Gospel. He removed the seat of empire to Byzantium, which he embellished, enlarged, and honored with his own name, and prohibited by a severe edict the performance of any Pagan rites and ceremonies throughout the city. His religious zeal augmented with his years; and towards the close of his life several imperial edicts were issued for the de-



molition of the heathen temples, and the prevention of any sacrifices upon the altars of the gods; whilst the reality of his religious ardor was testified by every external observance which could demonstrate his conviction of the truths, and his zeal for its propagation. Without having received the initiatory rite of baptism, or having been placed in the rank of a catechumen, Constantine performed many of the solemn ceremonies appointed by the Church; he fasted, observed the feasts in commemoration of the martyrs, and devoutly watched during the whole night on the vigils of the saints. In his last illness, he summoned to the imperial palace at Nicomedia, several Christian bishops, fervently requesting to receive from them the sacrament of baptism, and solemnly protesting his intentions to spend the remainder of his life as the disciple of Christ. Eusebius, bishop of that city, administered to him the sacred rite;\* and the emperor expired, after a short illness, on the 22d of May, in the year 337, aged 64.

The prosperity and happiness of Constantine were only interrupted by the theological animosity which divided his Christian subjects, and which the well-meant efforts of the emperor were insufficient to compose. The account of these contests belongs to a different section of our history; but it is necessary to mention that the schism of the Donatists, and the still more fatal Arian controversy, which involved the Christian world in contentious disputes concerning the person of Christ, distressed the mind of the monarch, and disturbed the tranquillity of that scene which he had flattered himself was to close with triumph the evening of his life.

The Christian Church was protected and supported under the dominion of the three sons of Constantine, who, with very inferior abilities, divided and governed the Roman world. The religious opinions of Arius, which had occasioned such violent dissensions in the church, were warmly espoused by Constantius, while Constantine and Constans, who ruled the western parts of the empire, were zealously engaged in the orthodox cause. After a dreadful scene of fraternal contention, Constantine and Constans were removed by death, and the imperial sceptre was again grasped by one hand, and that the hand of a professed friend to Christianity. But the unhappy disputes concerning the person of Christ, which disturbed the peace of every member of the church, left them not in a situation to enjoy that blessing which had so ardently been wished for by their predecessors in the faith. The Arian party

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\*After baptism, he laid aside entirely his purple and regal robes, and continued to wear a white garment till the day of his death.

obtained the vigorous support of Constantius; and the venerable professors of orthodoxy were involved in calamity and opprobrium, and by threats and punishments were exhorted to violate their integrity, and to embrace the opinions of the emperor and the court.

Julian, the nephew of Constantine, who on the death of Constantius ascended the imperial throne, was a steady and insidious enemy to the Christians, whose faith he had abjured, and whose professors he detested and despised. Affecting a liberality of sentiment which extended to every thing within its reach, he avoided an open persecution of the Christians; but his attacks were artfully directed to undermine the very foundations of the Church. To effect this he strictly prohibited the Christians from teaching philosophy, and the liberal arts; destroyed the privilege which had been granted to their society; and exhausted all his powers of wit and sophistical ingenuity, to exhibit them in a ridiculous and contemptible light. The deserted temples were once more opened for the reception of the multitude, and Polytheism reared her unnumbered heads in every part of the empire. To gratify his rancor against the Christians still more, the emperor protected and favored the Jews, and resolved to rebuild their temple at Jerusalem. This attempt served only, however, to afford a further testimony to the truths of the Gospel predictions; for, considerable balls of fire are affirmed to have repeatedly issued from the foundations, and destroyed the artificers, who, after several attempts, were compelled to desist from their purpose. Had the apparently moderate measure of Julian been directed to an impartial toleration of all religious systems, much praise might be due to a man, who, though mistaken in a very important point, possessed the principles of benignity and candor; but his rancor towards the Christians was marked and extreme; he industriously fomented the disturbances by which they were separated, and plundered the magnificent church of Antioch. The disgraceful feelings of revenge instigated him to oppose a religion, which had been so highly indebted for its establishment to a predecessor whose memory he detested. There were, doubtless, many traits of a superior understanding in Julian; but his philosophy was disgraced by a servile attachment to popular applause, by profound dissimulation, and by a superstitious regard to magic; the certain proof of an unenlightened and contracted mind. There is the utmost reason to believe that the emperor's hatred to Christianity would have been still more apparently displayed, had he not perished in the Persian war, in the second year of his reign.

The death of Julian restored to the Church a protector in



the person of the emperor Jovian, who was raised by the suffrages of the army from a private station to the imperial throne. Jovian had scarcely assumed the purple, before the religious commotions, which during the short reign of his predecessor had secretly heated the contending parties, burst forth with added impetuosity and strength. Every contender hoped to find in the emperor a protector, who, while he elevated their opinions into notice by his own profession, might blast and crush those of their opponents. He embraced the cause of Consubstantiality, but without persecuting the Arians. His successor, Valentinian, pursued the same line of conduct, and was actuated by sentiments of liberality and toleration, never experienced by his brother Valens, who severely persecuted the Consubstantialists in the eastern division of the empire. They again obtained an ascendancy under Gratian, and Theodosius the great; the latter of whom conceived the romantic project of healing all further division, by a convention of all the jarring sects, in which the subtleties of these mysteries might be discussed, and the truths of religion defined and established.

On a cursory review of the events of the fourth century, it might be conceived, that however it had been afflicted by the severe persecution under Diocletian, the general state of the Christian world must have been more prosperous and happy than at any preceding period. Openly professed by the emperors, established as the religion of the empire, and the interests of the Church by every possible means extended and enlarged, we should naturally expect that this would have been the golden period of the Christian Church, and that its professors, too near the fountain head of truth not to imbibe the pure and unpolluted stream, and firmly secured in the possession of their divine rights, would have enjoyed in tranquility and innocence those blessings which their progenitors had looked for with anxious wishes and trembling hopes. But the unhappy disputes which had arisen concerning points difficult to be understood, involved them in domestic evils, scarcely less pernicious to their prosperity and peace than the edicts of the persecutor or the sword of the tyrant. The Consubstantialist, who believes Christ to be of one or the same substance with the Father, beheld with haughty contempt, or indignant scorn, the person and the followers of the presbyter Arius, while the Arian returned his disdain with implacable animosity. The historian Sozomen draws a very favorable picture of the general conduct of the clergy during this period. The bishops, he says, were men of exemplary characters; and the zeal and virtues of the presbyters were such that they conciliated more and more the

affections of the people, and gained converts from paganism every day. As the Church however increased in numbers, we are authorized to believe that its native purity became in some degree contaminated. Calamity and opposition too are favorable to the promotion of virtue; many of the professors of Christianity would naturally lose, in ease and security, a part of that integrity which distinguished them in the crisis of danger and of contest; and the stock of piety would be little augmented by those converts, who now professed Christianity, not from a conviction of its truths, but either from an indifference to any religious system, or a fashionable compliance with the faith of the court. The Diocletian persecution was preceded by considerable depravation of manners; and before that had abated, the Church was a sufferer from internal dissension, from the cabals of ambitious members, and from schism even amongst the reputed orthodox. From the year 330 to that of 370, the Persian Christians underwent a series of great sufferings, in which considerable numbers perished; and their calamities were renewed towards the close of this century. Many bishops and other pious persons were sacrificed in this cruel persecution.

The extraordinary pains taken by Constantine for the propagation of evangelical truth, were attended with uncommon success. It cannot be doubted but a multitude of nominal professors, influenced by the example and authority of the emperor, would enter into the Church. But its limits were extended to remote nations. The inhabitants both of the Greater and Lesser Armenia boasted the having received Christianity soon after its promulgation; but in this century the monarch Tiridates, with his court, publicly professed the truths of the Gospel, and established the Armenian Church. The Abyssinians, or Ethiopians, received the faith from Frumentius, a zealous Egyptian, who, after being consecrated by Athanasius at Alexandria, returned to Abyssinia, and officiated as the bishop of that country. Iberia, or Georgia, received also in this century the Christian faith. Before its close, a considerable number of the warlike Goths enrolled themselves under the peaceable banner of the Gospel; and their progress in Christianity was considerable increased by the zeal and abilities of their bishop Ulfila, who translated the Scriptures into their language, after having previously formed an alphabet for their use, composed upon the model of the Latin and Greek characters. It is said, that in this translation Ulfila omitted the Book of Kings, that he might not increase, by the account of their achievements, the too prevalent passions for war in this fierce nation.



The benignant effects of the mild and equitable doctrines of the Gospel upon the happiness of mankind, must have been strikingly evinced during this century by the Christian world. That humane and equitable dispensation, which provided for the happiness of all mankind, breathed its spirit into the laws of Constantine. Many of the evils, and much of the duration of slavery, were abolished by that monarch, who also softened the rigor of punishments; prohibited sanguinary and ferocious spectacles to the people; prevented oppression, and provided for the necessities of the poor; restrained the licentiousness of divorces, and the custom of exorbitant interest for money. Whatever were the corruptions which had been introduced into Christianity, the professors of the Gospel were still distinguished by their peculiar virtue, and, in the famine under Maximin, were remarkable for exertions of compassion and charity, unknown to the votaries of Paganism.

The Church which had received so many advantages from the conversion and protection of Constantine, cheerfully submitted to acknowledge the emperor as its supreme head, who chose to unite the office of sovereign pontiff with the imperial dignity. No very material change appears to have resulted from this appointment. In some cases he corrected its abuses, in others extended its powers. Whatever respected the possessions, the reputation, the rights and privileges of the clergy, he regulated himself. Every thing relating to religious controversies, to the forms of divine worship, to the vices of the ecclesiastical orders, or the offices of the priests, was submitted to the bishops, or to the consideration of councils. Constantine assumed to himself the title of bishop, and regulator of the external affair of the Church; and he and his successors convened councils in which they presided, and determined every affair relating to discipline. The limits of episcopal power were, however, never exactly defined between the emperor and the clergy, and in some instances were so much involved, that each party frequently encroached upon the confines of the other.

The claims of superior antiquity had placed the bishop of Rome at the head of the clerical order, and he maintained his pretensions to superiority by immense splendor and magnificence. His authority had, however, before the close of the fourth century, a formidable rival in the bishop of Constantinople, who, in the council convened at that city, was elevated to the second clerical rank in the empire. From this period may be dated that contention and rancor which long existed between these two contending rivals, and which at length

ended in a final separation between the Greek and Latin churches.

The extensive power and revenues of the bishops in the principal sees, offered too potent a temptation to ambition and avarice, for clerical integrity always to resist. Hence arose considerable contests for the attainment of vacant sees; and every artifice of flattery and dissimulation was occasionally practised to ensure the approbation of the multitude, whose suffrages were taken in the election of their ministers. One melancholy instance of clerical depravity, which took place in this century, may serve as a specimen of that departure from primitive virtue which marked the conduct of considerable numbers. In the year 336, the vacant see of Rome was, by the greater part of the clergy and people, conferred upon Damasus; and this choice was confirmed by his being regularly ordained by the bishops. The artful Ursicinus had, however, by various intrigues, obtained ordination to the see of Rome from some other bishops, and prepared to take possession of what he chose to consider as his right. This gave rise to a furious contest, in which both parties proceeded to blows, and even to bloodshed and murder. The banishment of Ursicinus was not sufficient to appease this tumult. His adherents refused to communicate with Damasus, and were also banished; but soon returned with their factious leader, and excited fresh commotions. The council of Aquileia solicited the emperor again to banish the turbulent prelate; but it was not till after several years that Damasus obtained the peaceable possession of his see.

The powers which had been possessed by the people in the election of their ministers, became productive of great scandals in the church, and were at length withdrawn. Those of the presbyters soon followed. They were not however lost: the bishops usurped many of the privileges with which the presbyters had been formerly invested, and the emperor and magistrates obtained many of the rights which had belonged to the religious community. The bishops of Rome, Constantino-ple, Antioch, Alexandria, and some others, assumed powers, superior to the other metropolitans, who were invested with the government of one province only; and the jurisdiction of the bishops differed according to the different extent of their respective sees. The mode of establishing the bishops in their functions and offices was one great object with the famous council of Nice. It was determined there, that every bishop should be ordained or consecrated by three bishops of the province, and that his election should be confirmed by the metropolitan.



In the reign of Constantine, the government of the church was as far as possible arranged conformably to the government of the State; the bishops corresponded to those magistrates whose jurisdiction was confined to single cities; the metropolitans to the proconsuls, or presidents of provinces; the primates to the emperor's vicars, each of whom governed one of the imperial provinces. Canons and prebendaries of cathedral churches took their rise from the societies of ecclesiastics, which Eusebius, bishop of Vercell, and after him Augustin, formed in their houses, and in which these prelates were styled their fathers and masters.

The revenues of the church were secured by the edict of Milan. Whatever had been lost by the persecution of Diocletian was restored, and the establishment continued to be supported by voluntary oblations, long after Christianity became the religion of the emperor and the empire. Constantine, moreover, granted to his subjects the full and free permission of bequeathing their possessions to the church; and by this measure fatally encouraged a practice which, while it filled the ecclesiastical treasury, left the weeping widow and the defenceless orphan to penury and distress, to a dependance upon their kindred, or upon the alms of the ecclesiastical body. But the riches of the clerical profession were also considerably augmented by the emperors themselves. Constantine bestowed upon the churches in every city, a regular allowance of corn for the purposes of charity, and the no less grateful present of considerable allotments of land. The institution of tithes is also generally believed to have taken place in the fourth century.

From the powers with which the ministers of religion were invested, it may naturally be inferred, that different kinds of ecclesiastical councils must necessarily be established. The first species of these consisted in an assembly of the bishops and presbyters of a particular city, or district; and the regulation of the ecclesiastical affairs within their jurisdiction, was the professed subject of deliberation. The second was composed of the bishops of several provinces, whose deliberations were directed to the concerns of the provincial churches, the forms of divine service, and religious controversies. The œcumenical or general councils were convened by the Emperor alone; in which the rulers of the church in every part of the empire were required to attend. The first general council was called by Constantine, A. D. 325, at Nice, in Bithynia, in which three hundred and eighteen bishops are said to have complied with the imperial summons, and the whole number of attending ecclesiastics has been computed at two thousand and

forty-eight persons. During the meeting of this venerable synod, which lasted two months, the Emperor frequently took a seat in the assembly, and even a part in the debates. In this council the doctrines of Arius was condemned. Jesus Christ was declared to be of the same essence with the Father. Arius was banished to Illyria, and his followers compelled to assent to the confession of faith composed by the synod. Several other regulations took place concerning the powers of the clergy, and the discipline of the Church. An attempt was made in this council, to insist upon the perpetual celibacy of the clergy, which was opposed by Paphnutius, an Egyptian bishop, individually uninterested in the event, as he had always continued unmarried. The suggestions of this prelate were seconded by the decrees of the fathers of the Nicene council. The Homoeousian faith, or the doctrine of Consubstantiality, was accepted by all the members of the synod, except Eusebius of Cæsarea, who yielded a reluctant and ambiguous compliance. The bishops also in general cheerfully submitted to the decrees of this council: the most eminent of its opposers was Eusebius of Nicomedia, who, after three months of wavering, was exiled and disgraced.

Another council, which was held at Constantinople in the year 383, has, with but little propriety, obtained the name of a general council; since the bishops of the eastern provinces alone presided in it, and the Romish Church rejected their canons. Though their creed, which added to that of the Nicene council more precise terms to express the divinity of the Holy Ghost, was accepted by the western clergy, still the bishop of Rome could ill digest the canon which assigned to his brother of Constantinople a degree of rank only inferior to his own, and which, with his peculiar advantages, might tend to raise him to an equality with himself.

It would be an endless and useless task to specify all the different local or provincial councils which were held in this century. They were commonly summoned as the different parties of Orthodox or Arians happened to be predominant; and had for their objects the deposing of bishops, or the censuring of obnoxious opinions.

It has been already remarked, that during the fourth century, the doctrines of the orthodox were more fully investigated, and accurately defined, than they had been in the preceding period. All who asserted with the schismatic Arius, that there was a time when the Son of God was not, that he was created out of nothing, or that he was of a different substance from the Father, were solemnly anathematized by successive councils, and declared the enemies of God. The term Consubstantialists was



conferred upon the opposers of the Arian doctrines by the council of Nice, the object of whose assembling has been already specified. In this council, the Homoousian doctrine, or consubstantiality of the three persons in the Godhead, was declared a fundamental article of the Christian faith, and has been received as such by the Greek, the Latin, the Oriental, and the Protestant churches. Too fatally addicted, however, to verbal disputes, many of the orthodox party were for a considerable time divided concerning the term *hypostasis*, which had been used in explaining the nature of the Trinity; and while some considered it as declaratory of one *person*, others contended for its signifying one *nature* in the Godhead. The use of this word was afterwards restricted to *person*, and the distinction of two entire and perfect natures in Christ, was fully proved and established. These doctrines concerning the nature of the Trinity, which in preceding ages had escaped the vain curiosity of man, and had been left undefined by words, and undetermined by any particular set of ideas, excited considerable contests through the whole of this century. The Semi-Arians violently attacked the divinity of the Holy Spirit, which was in the general council of Constantinople discussed and defined, and the doctrine of Three Persons in one God, established as the orthodox belief of the church.

The following may be considered as an exact summary of the orthodox faith at this period. It is a translation of the *Nicene Creed*, as it stands in the Epistle of Eusebius to the Cæsareans, in Athanasius's Epistle to Jovian, &c.

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten; begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father. God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made, things in heaven, and things on earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down, and was incarnate, and became man, suffered, and rose again the third day, and ascended into the heavens, and comes to judge the quick and the dead: and in the Holy Ghost. And the Catholic and Apostolic Church doth anathematise those persons, who say, that there was a time when he the Son of God was not; that he was not before he was born; that he was made of nothing, or of another substance or being; or that he is created, or changeable, or convertible."

But whatever might be the advantages derivable from this precision respecting doctrines, many of the practices encouraged by the Christians of the fourth century were far from conducing either to piety or good morals. Superstition assumed

the venerable form of religion; abstruse and fanatical explanations of Scripture bewildered the imaginations of the multitude; and Christianity was defended, not with the invincible arm of simplicity and truth, but by the glittering and brittle weapons of sophistry and invective. An increasing veneration for saints and martyrs was greatly promoted, not only by the Christian emperors, who erected superb churches over their remains, but by the exhortations of the fathers of the church, who inculcated the belief of extraordinary miracles performed by their relics; and incited a degree of worship towards those departed saints, whom they represented as interceding with God in favor of those by whom they were invoked. About the year 386 the piety of considerable numbers of the people consisted chiefly in the carriage and preservation of bones and relics; and extraordinary revelations were pretended to have been made from heaven, for the discovery of the remains of celebrated martyrs to the faith. Their bodies had commonly been secretly interred by the pious zeal of their followers, in some obscure place; whence, after the persecution ceased, they had been brought forth, and decently buried. This custom, in some measure, gave rise to the *translation of relics*, which was still farther advanced by a conformity to the practices of the Pagans, who carried about the imagies of their gods with great solemnity. Constantine commanded the bodies of St. Andrew and St. Luke to be conveyed away from the sepulchres where they were deposited, to the magnificent church at Constantinople, which he had dedicated to the Twelve Apostles. The remains of St. Stephen, after they had remained buried and unknown more than three centuries, were said to have been revealed by Gamaliel, the tutor of St. Paul, to the favored Lucianus, a priest, and being discovered in the place to which he had directed the search, were removed with the utmost solemnity to Jerusalem; where they became so celebrated from the miracles they were said to have performed, that many devout visitors to Jerusalem enriched their native cities, on their return, with small portions of these surprising remains. An oratory, or chapel, was always erected over this sacred deposit, which was called a memorial of the martyr whose relics it contained. The tomb of our Saviour at Jerusalem was held in great estimation, and was resorted to by crowds of pious visitors, who carried away with them large portions of *holy earth*, which was highly prized. One of the most extraordinary discoveries of this century was that of the cross on which Christ had suffered; which was said to have been found by Helena, the mother of Constantine, on her visit to the holy sepulchre. Whatever may be the real history of this transaction, whether



any discovery was made, or whether Helena was a dupe or an associate in finding out this treasure thus much is certain, that pieces of this precious wood were distributed throughout the Christian world, and the cross, according to the testimony of Saint Paulinus, containing a vital virtue in an inanimate and insensible, substance yielded, and continued to yield almost daily, its precious wood to the desires of an infinite number of persons, without suffering any diminution, or appearance of having been touched. A degree of respect not less superstitious than that paid to the wood of the cross, was demonstrated by Constantine towards the image of Christ, which he commanded to be made of the most precious materials, and to be placed in the most superb apartment of the imperial palace. The invocation of saints arose in this century, and may probably have originated from apostrophes to the martyrs to the faith, similar to those which occur in the funeral orations of the Heathen poets and orators.

The belief of a state of temporary punishment after this life in some respects analogous to the notions of purgatory entertained by the modern catholics, had been inculcated by Origen in the preceding century, and was insisted upon in this by Gregory Nazianzen, Ambrose, and some others of the Christian teachers. Gregory conceived with Origen, that the wicked, after remaining a sufficient time in that place of suffering to be purified from sin, would obtain mercy from God; while Ambrose contended for the eternity of punishment in certain cases,

Another branch of superstition which daily increased was monkery, the actual establishment of which is to be dated from the fourth century. There were, indeed, several solitaries who, like Paul of Thebes, in the preceding ages, had sequestered themselves from the employments of social life; but the Egyptian Anthony, already mentioned appears to have been the first who induced any considerable number to associate with him in the monastic state. Numbers, seized by a fanatical spirit, voluntarily inflicted upon themselves the severest sufferings, and were content to be deprived of every earthly good. In this solitary state, like their leader, the illiterate Anthony, they rejected learning as useless, if not pernicious, and professed to be solely occupied in silence, meditation, and prayer. When, however, they were formed into regular societies, they employed some part of their time in study. Their melancholy modes of life prepared and qualified them for all the vagaries of a heated imagination: they had prophetic dreams, saw visions, conversed with the different inhabitants of the invisible world, and many closed a life of madness in despair. The emperor Constantine

contributed greatly to the respect paid to this state, by his attachment to those who devoted themselves to *divine philosophy*, or monkery. Considerable numbers of the softer sex forsook their elegant abodes, and all the endearments of domestic life, to dwell in caves and deserts. Amongst these, Paula, a matron, descended from one of the most illustrious families at Rome, with her daughter Eulalia, rent assunder every delicate domestic tie; and, forsaking her home, her country, and her weeping offspring, she visited Jerome in Palestine, accompanied him in his visit to Epiphanius at Cyprus, and went to Paulinus at Antioch. Egypt was the great theatre for monastic action; and, at the close of the fourth century, it was computed that twenty-seven thousand monks and nuns were to be found in that country. As neither opulence nor talents were required from these solitary devotees, monkery offered an agreeable asylum to the indolent and illiterate, who, if their pretensions to austerity were sufficiently fervent, were at once elevated into stations of peculiar honor and respectability. The conduct of the monks was agreeable to the different motives of religion, fanaticism, or hypocrisy, from which they had entered into that state. Many of them were pious, modest, disinterested, and compassionate; some gloomy, austere, and censorious; and others artfully obtained a considerable part of that property, the renunciation of which it was their principal employment to inculcate.

The fortunate Anthony had the happiness, in traversing the deserts, to discover the retreat of Paul the hermit, whose eyes he piously closed, and resolved to imitate his holy example. His solitude was soon enlivened by numbers, for whose government he composed regulations, which were in a short time introduced by his disciple Hilarion into Syria and Palestine, and by others into Mesopotamia and Armenia. From the east it passed with celerity into the west. Basil introduced it into Greece, and Ambrose into Italy. Martin, the celebrated bishop of Tours, propagated monkery so rapidly in Gaul, that his funeral is said to have been attended by no less than 2000 monks. The numbers of these deluded people, and the veneration paid to them, were such as to induce them sometimes to conceive themselves superior to the laws, the execution of which they frequently suspended, and ventured, with impunity, to snatch criminals from the hands of justice when they were conducting to execution. The monks were divided into different orders, according to the different modes of life which they were disposed to adopt. The Cenobites were associated under a governor, and dwelt in fixed habitations. The Eremites solitarily resided in deserts, caves, or holes in the earth. The Anachorites wildly



wandered in the most sequestered retreats, supported life by the spontaneous productions of the earth, without any settled places of abode. The Sarabaites were the venders of pretended relics and the performers of fictitious miracles. All these orders originally included, equally, both the laity and clergy, but the increasing respect paid to these pretensions of extraordinary sanctity; occasioned some of the best ecclesiastical benefices to be offered to the monks, and in time the greater number of them were engaged in the immediate service of the church.

Under the auspices of an emperor who publicly professed the faith of the church, we naturally expect to see its external respectability increase. Constantine not only greatly enlarged and improved the edifices already erected, but he constructed a considerable number of additional temples, which he dedicated to departed saints, and adorned them with pictures or images, and the most costly magnificence. A very superb structure was reared, by the orders of the emperor, over the sepulchre of Christ at Jerusalem. Constantinople was adorned by the emperor with a superb church, dedicated to the Twelve Apostles, which he proposed to make his own mausoleum; not perhaps without a latent hope that his soul might be benefitted by his dust being mingled with the bones of those holy men, which he had carefully endeavored to collect wherever they lay dispersed. Numberless churches, in different places, were erected over the tombs of the martyrs, which were only used on particular occasions, and were distinguished by the name of Martyria. The churches appointed for the constant performance of religious worship obtained the name of Tituli, and were thus denominated from the presbyters who officiated in them, and who received titles from them which fixed them to their particular situations. This regulation was well adapted for the decent and regular performance of divine worship. The attention of the emperor Constantine appears to have been seriously directed to this object, and to have operated not merely in seasons of leisure and tranquillity, but even in tumult and war. When he marched against the enemy, a tent was erected for him in the form of a chapel; which accompanied him in his movements, and in which divine service was performed by the attending priests and deacons. Hence arose the custom of appointing a chaplain to every legion in the imperial army. Opulent persons who erected religious edifices, were invested with the right of appointing to them whatever ministers they chose to officiate. The Martyria and Tituli were equally decorated with every ornament which formerly embellished the temples of Heathenism; and Christian rites were solemnized with all the

pomp of lights, lustrations, and of splendid garments, which had distinguished the Pagan ceremonies. In all churches, the seats of the women were separated from those of the men, who were not permitted to enter at the same door. The seats for females, however, differed in different churches. In the churches of Anastasia and Sancta Sophia, they were placed in porticoes, or galleries, whilst the men were seated below. In conformity to the practice both of the Heathens and the Jews, the rights of sanctuary were claimed and allowed to the Christian temples; and, by the laws of the younger Theodosius, malefactors of various descriptions might claim protection from the church against the civil power, within any of the precincts of consecrated ground; the respect for which had become so excessive, that none were allowed to administer the sacrament beyond the places that were consecrated.

The difference which had arisen in the composition of the Christian preachers; was not more remarkable, than the manner in which these discourses were received. Those applauses which had formerly been confined to the Theatres, or the Forum, were now permitted in the Christian Church. The preacher was repeatedly interrupted by the cry of "Orthodox," and clapping of the hands and feet. Chrysostom was applauded in the great church at Constantinople, by the people's waving their garments, their plumes, and their handkerchiefs: and by others laying their hands on their swords, and exclaiming, "Thou art worthy of the priesthood." Another mark of admiration consisted in moving the body like the waves of the sea slightly agitated by the wind. In some places, marks of still greater adulation were paid to the ministers of religion; and the people sung Hosannahs to the bishop, similar to the conduct of the multitude toward our Lord on his entrance into Jerusalem.

The liturgies which were adopted in the different churches were far from being composed in the same form. Provided the fundamental doctrines of religion were the same, it was conceived of small importance in what manner the ritual was observed. They differed therefore materially in different churches, according to the circumstances or dispositions of the members. The same license which was given to the liturgies, was accorded to the creeds, which, though they agreed in doctrine, differed materially in their construction. The pomp of worship was greatly augmented in several churches, by an alteration which took place in the singing, particularly in the church of Antioch, where the vocal performers were separated into two divisions, and sung the Psalms of David alternately. Constantine com-



manded the first day of the week to be celebrated with peculiar solemnity; and, in time, this practice extended over the whole Christian world.

The Agapæ, which for the three first centuries were observed in the church, owing to some abuses which had insinuated themselves into their celebration, began to be disesteemed, and in time gradually declined. There were, however, various other observances to compensate, as far as external rites could compensate, for their loss. In this century many new festivals were instituted in honor of the martyrs, and particular respect was paid to the places where they suffered, or where their remains were interred.

As baptism and the Lord's supper were very commonly supposed to impart some spiritual grace, the former of these rites was frequently deferred till the evening of life, and even till the hour of death, that the believer might leave the world with the greater certainty of his sins being forgiven, and before any new guilt had been contracted. Baptism at this period was usually accompanied by the sign of the cross. Many were so desirous of receiving this initiatory rite in the same place with Christ, that they delayed baptism till they could travel into Judea. The emperor Constantine was amongst the number of those who favored this species of popular superstition, and earnestly desired to receive the baptismal rite in the waters of Jordan.

Amongst the powers which in the fourth century were granted to the bishops, they appear to have been invested with authority sufficient to appoint fasts in their own churches. The abstinence upon these occasions, though strictly observed by great numbers, was yet by several commuted for by refraining from animal food and the juice of the grape; so that in fact, though the nominal facts were, in conformity to the prevailing austerities, considerably multiplied, abstinence was less observed by many than when they were less frequent. The use of penance still continued, but the offending clergy were exempted from public humiliation, and silently deposed from their ecclesiastical offices. After the Decian persecution, it was ordained that penitents should make their confession in private, to a particular priest appointed for that purpose; and that those parts of their misconduct which were unfit for the public ear should be suppressed. This custom continued in practice till nearly the close of this century, when an unhappy accident, which arose in the Constantinopolitan church, occasioned the abolition of this order. An offending female, during the appointed time in which she remained in the church, to wipe off by fasting and prayer her former offences, had been seduced, by one of the

deacons, to contract fresh guilt. From this period, all confession, whether public or private, appears to have been discontinued by the Greek church; and it is affirmed, that, from this period, the Greeks make their confessions only to God.

The controversy concerning the celebration of Easter, which had perplexed and divided the church during the preceding century, was decided by the council of Nice, in favor of the western Churches; and all Christians were commanded to commemorate this festival on the first Sunday which followed the fourteenth day of the first moon, after the vernal equinox. The emperor Constantine watched in common with the other Christians on the vigil of this solemn season; and, in addition to the lights which had been formerly kindled on this occasion, commanded not only the whole church, but also the whole city to be illuminated; which, in consequence of this request, exhibited on that evening a scene of uncommon splendor. This season was observed by the generality of Christians with peculiar reverence and marked attention. Valentinian, in this year 367, released from prison, on the occasion of this festival, all such as were not notorious delinquents; and established a custom which was imitated by succeeding emperors. Private persons also embraced the occasion which this season afforded to evince their beneficence and charity, particularly by granting *manumission* to *slaves*, as a proper expression of that mercy commemorated by this festival, which brought freedom to the captive, and happiness to all mankind.

The doctrines of the mystics, who assumed a degree of sanctity and perfection unknown to vulgar minds, and affected to elevate the soul by rejecting the gratifications of sense, were adopted by the most considerable part of the Christian world, as the dictates of pure religion, imbibed from the fountain of truth. Amongst those who carried these doctrines to the greatest excess, the sects of the Eustathians and Messalians were peculiarly distinguished. The followers of Eustathius contended strongly for the exercise of the greatest austerities, and not only prohibited the employments of wine, flesh, and a connubial state; but prescribed immediate divorce to all who had already entered into a married life. This fanaticism was, however, inferior to that of the Messalians, who professed to believe that the soul, by spiritual exercises, was enabled to expel the demon by which they conceived it to be inhabited, and might then be perfectly united with the Divine Essence.\* The Messalians affected an air of uncommon devotion; and maintained their

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\* It is more than once necessary to caution the reader, to receive all these accounts of the sectaries with great allowance. In all probability many parts



ground in the Eastern empire during a considerable time, in defiance of the decrees of councils, and the proscriptions of the emperor.

Amongst the contests which disturbed the peace of the church in the fourth century, the scism of the Donatists demands, if not the principal, at least a distinguished place. The doctrines of this body were, however, strictly conformable to those of the church from which they separated. Cæcilianus, the archdeacon of Carthage, had, on the demise of the bishop, been consecrated to the vacant see by some of the African bishops, without waiting for the assent of the bishops of Numidia. These offended prelates cited Cæcilianus to account to them for this omission; and on his refusal to submit to their authority, a council was convened, consisting of seventy bishops, in which the refractory Cæcilianus was deposed and his deacon, Majorinus, declared his successor. This sentence which divided into factions the Carthaginian church, and in fact gave it two bishops at the same crisis, was occasioned by a variety of causes, independent of the irregularity attending the consecration of Cæcilianus. There were several competitors for the vacant see, who eagerly seized the opportunity of removing their fortunate rival; and all the influence of Lucilla, a rich and superstitious female, was exerted against Cæcilianus, who had reprimanded her for her folly. Nor was this all. Felix of Aptungus, the principal bishop who had assisted at his consecration, was accused of being a traitor, or one, who, during the Diocletian persecution, had delivered up the sacred books to be burned; and who therefore was supposed not competent to impart the gift of the Holy Spirit. To these it was added, that Cæcilianus himself had, during the persecution, behaved towards the Christians with inhumanity. Constantine appointed this controversy to be examined by the bishop of Rome, assisted by three others; and the result of their deliberations was favorable to Cæcilianus. Felix of Aptungus was not less fortunate; his cause was examined by the proconsul of Africa, and by his decision he was absolved.

But the restoration of the degraded bishop was not calculated to satisfy the minds of his adversaries; who headed by Donatus, an African bishop, fomented fresh discontents, and occasioned the emperor to convene a council at Arles,\* where they were again condemned. Their dissatisfaction still continued; and

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of their creed bordered upon absurdity; but as we have our accounts only from their adversaries, candor must induce us to believe them exaggerated.

\* At this council 200 bishops attended, and amongst the rest Restitutus, bishop of London.

two years afterwards, Constantine, to whom the different parties had consented to refer their cause, approved the consecration of Cæcilianus. The resentment and contumely with which the Donatists received this decision, added to the former behavior, so much exasperated the emperor, that he deprived them of their churches, banished the seditious bishops, and even condemned to death some of the party. This violent, and perhaps imprudent resentment, was not calculated to produce peace. The Donatists asserted, that the apostolical succession had been interrupted; that the whole ecclesiastical body in Europe and Asia was infected with guilt and schism, since they held communion with the depraved African Church; that the preservation of the Catholic Church was confined to those African believers who had preserved their faith and discipline inviolate, and that all communion with other churches ought to be avoided, lest they should be contaminated by their impurity. This rigid theory was accompanied by conduct equally austere. Every proselyte was carefully re-baptized and re-ordained. All who had communicated with other churches, were obliged to perform public penance previous to their admission into this immaculate church. But it was not with the pen and the tongue only that the cause of Donatism was supported. The Circumcellians, a body of savage and fantastical persons, exasperated by the severe execution of the laws of Constantine against the Donatists, collected in formidable bodies, assumed the titles of captains and saints, and rushed out as avengers of those who had been the victims of the law, spreading terror and consternation throughout the African provinces. Animated by implacable hatred against the opposite party, and a fanatical desire for obtaining the honor of martyrdom, they sought death with avidity, and even solicited their enemies to inflict upon them those temporal miseries which should introduce them to eternal glory. Constantine, hoping that time might be more conducive than force to calm these disturbances, abrogated the laws against the Donatists; and his son Constans labored earnestly to heal the divisions of the African Church. But these efforts were in vain; Donatus the Great (who had succeeded Majorinus, and from whom the party derived its name,) with the other factious prelates, opposed every attempt towards a reconciliation. The whole party rose in arms, and were defeated by the imperial army: numbers fled, a considerable part were sent into banishment, and many were punished with extreme severity. The Donatists divided into many sects, amongst whom the Rogatians contended, that the church of Christ existed only in their community.

The schism of the Donatists was an imperious torrent, which



inundated and desolated the adjacent country; but its limits were prescribed, and its mischief confined to the African provinces. The Trinitarian controversy was a deluge which overflowed the whole Christian world. Arius, a presbyter of the church of Alexandria, acute, eloquent, and subtle, contended, in opposition to his bishop Alexander, in an assembly of the presbyters, "that the Son was essentially distinct from the Father: that he was a dependent spontaneous production, created by the will of the Father out of nothing: that he had been begotten before all worlds; but that there had been a time when he was not: that the Father had impressed upon him the effulgence of his glory, and transfused into him his ample spirit: that he was the framer of the world, and governed the universe, in obedience to the will of his Father and Monarch." As every innovation will find some favorers, especially if supported by ingenuity, the party of Arius soon became very considerable, and was countenanced by two bishops, and by numbers distinguished both by rank and abilities. Alexander, together with the inferior ministers of the Alexandrian Church, exhorted the apostate presbyter to renounce his errors, and return to their communion; but finding this ineffectual, the zealous prelate assembled a council of his brethren, composed of an hundred bishops, who, after hearing Arius persist in his opinions, publicly condemned them. Not discouraged, however, by this act of authority, Arius retired into Palestine, where he was received into communion, and made considerable accessions to his cause, notwithstanding the excommunications which were fulminated by Alexander against both him and his schismatic followers.

These disputes, in which many wise and good men were engaged on both sides, and in which the angry combatants assailed each other with the utmost opprobrium and contumely, attracted the attention of Constantine, who, in order to quiet a disturbance so disgraceful to the church, wrote both to the bishop and the presbyter, reprimanding them for their intemperance, and exhorting them to peace. But the words of the emperor were not sufficiently powerful to extinguish a flame which had been too long permitted, and which, at that period, raged with the utmost violence. In the year 325, therefore, he convened the celebrated council at Nice in Bythia, of which an ample account has already been given. Before this council Arius appeared, declared his opinions, and, with his friends the bishops of Ptolemias and Marmorica, who refused to subscribe to the Nicene faith, was condemned. The apostate presbyter was banished; his writings were committed to the flames, and cap-

ital punishments were denounced against all in whose possession they might be found. A party of the bishops who had assisted at the Nicene council, and subscribed to its creed, secretly favored the cause of Arius; and Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, and Theognis, bishop of Nice, afforded protection to the persecuted Arians, for which they were banished into Gaul. The faith of Constantine appears, in this instance, to have been rather uncertain and wavering; he understood not this perplexed controversy, and acted, at different times, as he was influenced by the ecclesiastics of each party, who accused one another not only of heterodoxy, but of disaffection to the emperor. One of the followers of Arius, who, by the dying words of his sister Constantia, had been recommended to the emperor, had the address to persuade him that the sentence of Arius was unjust. The emperor on this, after an exile of three years, recalled the presbyter, who presented his confession of faith (which appeared orthodox to Constantine,) and sought to be received into communion in the Alexandrian church. Athanasius, who had succeeded Alexander in that see, rejected his application; but this resistance was so little agreeable to the emperor, that the Arian bishops easily procured from him a decree for the banishment of the Alexandrian bishop. Arius and his adherents were received into the communion of the church at Jerusalem; but were still rejected by that of Alexandria. The emperor, however, sent for him to Constantinople, and issued an absolute command for his admission into the Constantinopolitan church. This honor was prevented by the unexpected death of Arius, which his enemies ascribed to the judgments of God against him for his impieties: his friends, however, had but too much reason for believing, that he had fallen the miserable victim of his implacable enemies.

The Arians found in the successor of Constantine a protector and a friend. The great patron, the bishop of Nicomedia, was promoted to the Constantinopolitan see; and while the western emperors, steadily attached to the Nicene faith, were advancing its progress by all possible means, Constantius was no less zealous in his opposition to that, and his attachment to the Arian cause. During the remainder of this century, except in the reign of Julian, the Nicene and the Arian parties were at different times protected by the different emperors, and the successful party invariably and brutally triumphed in the commission of every act of unkindness and severity that could disturb and distress their adversaries. But the hatred of the Arians was not confined to the Consubstantialists. They divided amongst themselves, and regarded each other with im-



placable aversion. The Homoiousians, or Semi-Arians declared their belief, that *the Son was of a similar substance with the Father*. The Eunomians, who were the disciples of *Ætius* and *Eunomius*, the latter a man of restless and aspiring spirit, who had entered into almost every profession of life, opposed their opinions, and contended that *the Son was unlike or unequal to the Father*. The Eunomians were condemned in the council of *Ancyra*, and in the two councils summoned by *Constantius*, one at *Seleucia* for the eastern church, the other at *Ariminum* for the western. The Eunomians were overpowered at *Seleucia*; and the assembly at *Ariminum*, which was composed of about a fourth part Arians, subscribed to a creed, which contained little more than the vague proposition, that the Son of God was not a creature like other creatures. The confession of *Ariminum* was sent through the empire, and all the bishops were required to subscribe it. But none were allowed to maintain Arianism, by asserting that the Son of God was of a nature unlike that of the Father, and to rank him in the number of creatures. These subtle and almost imperceptible distinctions divided the Arians into a considerable number of sects, who mutually detested and anathematized each other. Towards the close of this century the Arians and Macedonians, a branch from the same stock, were compelled by the imperial laws to have no bishops. This sect, however, flourished considerably for more than three centuries, and was not at length crushed without violence and persecution. Its tenets were received by the Goths, the Vandals, and the Burgundians, and long continued to be professed by those barbarous nations.

The Semi-Arians, as may be conceived from their name, adopted not all the opinions of their Arian brethren; but they rejected the doctrine of consubstantiality with equal zeal, though the greater part of them professed to believe the divinity of the Logos, or Word (the Son of God;) but many utterly denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Like the Arians, the Semi-Arians were divided into sects, the principal of which obtained the name of Macedonians, from their leader *Macedonius*; who, while he denied the consubstantiality of the Son, asserted his likeness to the Father; and affirmed, that the third person in the Trinity was a divine energy diffused throughout the universe, and not a distinct person proceeding from the Father and the Son. Many of the Semi-Arians gradually united themselves to the orthodox party, from whom their grounds of difference were, in some instances, scarcely perceptible, and signed the Nicene confession of faith. On the promulgation

of the law of toleration by the emperor Gratian, many of the Semi-Arians again seceded from the church; but their numbers afterwards, from a variety of causes, sensibly declined.

It is difficult to determine whether the Meletians should be considered as a distinct sect, or as a society of Arians. The schism was originally produced by the deposition of Meletius, bishop of Lycopolis in Egypt, who was accused of various offences, and particularly of sacrificing to idols in a time of persecution. After his deposition by the council of Alexandria, however, Meletius continued to assume the titles, and exercised the functions of his office. He afterwards united with Arius; but whether previous to the meeting of the council of Nice, or not, is not ascertained. At this council the affair of Meletius was compromised, apparently to his satisfaction: for he was allowed to retain the title of bishop, without the functions. The sect however continued till the fifth century, and professed the doctrines of Arius.

Arianism, which engaged the attention of all ranks of the people during the whole of this century, did not so entirely engross them as to prevent the propagation and reception of other opinions, which differed from those of the orthodox creed. Photinus, bishop of Sirmium, asserted, that Jesus Christ was born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, and endued with a divine emanation, or heavenly ray, which he called the *Word*; and that, on account of this union between the divine word and his human nature, Jesus was styled the Son of God, and even God himself. He denied that the Holy Spirit was a distinct person, and affirmed that he was a celestial *virtue*, proceeding from the Deity. This prelate was the disciple and friend of Marcellus, the bishop of Ancyra, who had been charged with adopting the errors of Sabellianism, or an attempt to confound the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead. Photinus occasioned his friendly tutor additional censure, whose impieties according to the charitable spirit of the times, were considerably augmented, by his refusal to condemn the errors of Photinus. Private friendship, Christian charity, or the knowledge that others were ready to involve him in evils similar to those which threatened and surrounded his pupil, were conceived reasons too weak to deter him from an endeavor to punish the errors of his friend. The efforts of repeated councils, and the effects of repeated banishments, were, for a long time, insufficient to destroy the errors of this sectary; who, though excommunicated by the church, defended himself during seven years by the assistance of the people; but at length died in exile.



The Appollonarians asserted, after Appollinaris, bishop of Laodicea, that the Divinity, joined to the flesh, performed the offices of an intelligent soul in Jesus Christ, and received the impression which the soul of man receives. Many of the followers of Appollinaris refined upon this, and affirmed, that one nature only existed in Jesus Christ, and that the flesh was of the same nature with the divinity. Others affirmed, that Jesus Christ had taken his body from heaven, and that it was impassive and immortal; and his birth; passion, death, burial, and resurrection, only illusive appearances. The council of Constantinople condemned these opinions, and many by whom they were professed were re-united to the communion of the church.

The Priscillianists derived their denomination from Priscillian, a man of rank and fortune in Spain, who was afterwards bishop of Abila. A considerable mixture of Gnosticism and Unitarianism appears to have been united in this sect, with the tenets of both which, however, they were but imperfectly acquainted. They thought that the Devil was not made by God, but arose from chaos and darkness; said that the bodies of men were made by the Devil; condemned marriage, and denied the resurrection of the body; asserted that the soul was of a divine substance, which having offended in heaven, was sent into the body as a place of punishment; that men are subject to necessity, to sin, and to the power of the stars; and our bodies compounded according to the order of the twelve signs of the Zodiac. They agreed that the Son is inferior to the Father, and that there was a time when the Son was not. The rule of manners prescribed by this sect was remarkably austere. Priscillian, their leader, was accused by the other Spanish bishops, in consequence of the increase of his followers; and he was banished by the emperor Gratian from Spain. He was again, however, permitted to return; but was once more accused by his implacable enemies, and put to death at Treves, in the year 384, by the perfidious Maximus, at the instigation of Ithacius, bishop of Soissons; who, whatever might be the professed purity of his faith, was deficient in every amiable quality of the human heart. The opinions of the Priscillianists did not end with the death of their erroneous and unfortunate leader, but extended their influence, and continued during several succeeding centuries.

The recorder of folly, if he be possessed of humanity, can find little enjoyment in his task, and it is equally unnecessary and unpleasant to dwell upon the opinions and conduct of those sects who differed from the church only in one or two points of perhaps little importance, or whose errors were received by

few, and soon terminated. Amongst these smaller sects were the Antidicomaranites, who contended, that after the birth of Christ the Virgin Mary did not continue in her immaculate state, but associated with her husband Joseph; and the Collyridians, who, falling into the opposite extreme, superstitiously worshipped the Virgin, and made an offering to her, upon certain appointed days, of a particular kind of bread. These errors were confined to a few; those of Lucifer, bishop of Cagliari in Sardinia, were rather more diffused. This prelate had been a zealous opposer of Arianism; he had separated himself not only from communion with all of that sect, but even from all who acknowledged as bishops those who had signed the Ariminum confession of faith, and had written against the Arians with great vehemence; but the purity of his own faith did not continue uncorrupted, and he is accused of asserting, that the soul was transfused from the parents to the children, and that it was of a fleshly substance.

Amidst the tide of superstition which had almost overflowed the church, many lamented its devastations, and some were so confident as to attempt to stop the torrent; but their courage was not rewarded either with applause or success; and, independent of the doctrinal errors into which they fell, they were, on account of their opposition to the corrupt and prevailing opinions of the age, loaded with calumny and regarded with abhorrence. One of the principal of these hardy champions for the truth was Audeus, a Syrian, of uncommon virtue, whose zeal against the profligacy of the clergy procured his excommunication from the church. Unmoved by the censures which he had incurred, Audeus associated himself with a society of Christians, who were distinguished not only by their abhorrence of clerical depravity, but by their attachment to the Jewish time of celebrating Easter; and their belief that the resemblance between God and man consisted in the body, whence they have been charged with believing that the Supreme Being was corporeal. He was banished by the emperor into Scythia, where he continued to make several converts, and established several monasteries. His zeal against superstition and depravity was seconded by Ætius, one of the leaders of the Semi-Arians; and Jovinian, an Italian monk. The principal point on which Ætius and his adherents differed from the other Semi-Arians, appears to have been their belief that there was no distinction founded in Scripture between a presbyter and a bishop. He earnestly condemned prayers for the dead, and several other rites, and attempted to restore the discipline of the church to its primitive simplicity and excellence. Jovinian, though himself a monk, and continuing in a state of celibacy, took the utmost pains to



expose the peculiar doctrines of monachism, though unlike the other reformers of his time, he continued in the orthodox faith. His doctrines were so obnoxious to the clergy, that he was excommunicated by Siricius, the bishop of Rome, and was condemned by the emperor Honorius to be whipped, and banished to the small and obscure island of Boa, in Illyricum.

Were we to estimate the learning and abilities of the writers of this century by their numbers or their zeal, our admiration of their talents would not be confined within ordinary limits. But intestine commotions and religious controversies are circumstances not extremely favorable to the most admired blossoms of literature, which expand in the gay sunshine of tranquillity, but close and fold their leaves in the inclement season of turbulence and distraction. The first emperor who professed Christianity had devoted little of his time to literature; and whatever favors he might be disposed to bestow upon monks and ecclesiastics, he does not appear to have greatly signalized himself as a patron of learning. A desire to abolish Paganism, which was supported by the wit and talents of some of its professors, and to advance Christianity upon its ruins, rather than a love of literature, induced the emperor to encourage a taste for study, and to erect public libraries for the extension of knowledge. But when honors and preferments were not annexed to excellence in learning, when science was not encouraged either by the favor of the prince, or the approbation of the people, and confined to the investigation of obscure scholastic theology, we cannot be surprised to find a rapid decay of the arts and sciences; numbers of the clergy unlearned, and the cell of the monk a fruitful hotbed for the cultivation of ignorance.

Notwithstanding this, there were, amongst the number of Christian writers in the fourth century, some who may be justly distinguished for their learning and elegance. Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, claims a distinguished rank in the catalogue, both on account of his abilities and virtue. He was a native of Palestine, and obtained his bishopric in the year 314; but at a very early period was accused of favoring the Arians, and of continuing attached to the bishops of that sect; and several of his expressions afford some ground for the belief, that the suspicion was not wholly unfounded. It is probable, however, that the candor and moderation of his temper, rather than any defection from the orthodox faith, might occasion this imputation. In the council of Nice he abandoned the Arian party, but supported them in their endeavors to deprive Athanasius of the Alexandrian see.

He composed an ecclesiastical history, from the commence-

ment of the church till the council of Nice;<sup>\*</sup> a chronicle of the principal events from the beginning of the world till the twentieth year of Constantine; four panegyric books of the life of that emperor, *the Preparation and Demonstration of the Gospel*; a discourse against the philosopher Hierocles, who compared Appollonius to Jesus Christ; five books against Marcellus of Ancyra; a Commentary on the Psalms; and five books of *An Opology for Origen*, which he wrote conjointly with his friend Pamphilus the Martyr, from his attachment to whom he received his name. To these he added a sixth book, after the death of his friend, and composed many treatises in divinity and criticism. The amiableness of his temper is apparent from no instance being adduced, by his enemies, of his having used any means of depressing others with the emperor, or of acquiring any advantage for himself. A suspicion, however, of a very serious nature has attacked the conduct of Eusebius, while under the apprehension of persecution; and he was thought to have purchased his retreat from the confinement of a prison, by compliances which were dishonorable, if not base. The inviolable attachment of Eusebius to the amiable and accomplished Pamphilus, presbyter at Cæsaria, does honor to his feelings as a man. He assumed his name, and composed an account of his life. This martyr to the faith erected a school at Cæsaria; and, after suffering much during the Diocletian persecution, was at length cruelly put to death. Few of his writings have reached posterity.

However varying, or however doubtful, the character of Eusebius may appear to the world, that of Athanasius is fixed, decisive, and resolute. A deacon in the Alexandrian church, at the commencement of the Arian disputes he joined in opinion with his bishop, and accompanied him to the council of Nice. On the demise of his diocesan he obtained the Alexandrian see, but he enjoyed not long in tranquillity his new situation: orthodox in his principles, decided in his opinions, and resolute in maintaining them, it is not surprising that he should soon become an object of detestation to the Arian party, whom he vehemently opposed. A charge was exhibited against him by his enemies, of having exacted new duties from the people for the emolument of the church. The charge was dismissed by the emperor, but two others succeeded; that he had thrown down and broken a sacred chalice, overthrown the sacramental elements, destroyed

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\* Once for all, let this acknowledgment suffice; that the basis of this history to the age of Constantine, is Eusebius, assisted by an inspection of the early fathers, and the remarks of modern writers.



the church of Marcotis, and that he had added murder to sacrilege, in killing Arsenius, bishop of Hypsele. To the first of these accusations he replied, by proving, that neither church, altar, nor chalice existed in the place where he was said to have destroyed them; and effectually refuted the other, by producing to the sight of his accusers the schismatic bishop, who had for a time thought proper to retire. The Arian party had, however, previously determined his disgrace; and in the council of Tyre he was degraded, deposed, and exiled. In vain the injured prelate hastily removed himself to Constantinople, and publicly pleaded his cause at the footstool of his prince. The charge of having threatened to prevent the exportation of corn from Alexandria to Constantinople had been urged against him to Constantine; who, irritated at his supposed contumacy, dismissed him into exile to Treves.

The accession of the sons of Constantine, which produced leave to the exiled bishops to return to their respective sees, restored Athanasius, by a decree of the younger Constantinus, (who continued in the orthodox faith,) to Alexandria. But the cabal and faction under Constantius again deposed him, ordained Gregory in his room, and ordered the prefect of Egypt to confirm the new archbishop in his office; while Athanasius retired to Rome. In a council of fifty bishops of Italy, the innocence of the deposed bishop was unanimously declared; and at the end of three years he received a summons to attend at Milan the emperor Constans, who required his brother to call a council for determining the case of Athanasius. In this council held at Sardica, after a series of angry debates, Athanasius was declared innocent; and Gregory very opportunely dying just at that period, he entered into the peaceable possession of his see. Tranquillity was not, however, the path in which Athanasius was destined to proceed; death removed his princely and generous protector Constans; and Constantius, in compliance with the reiterated persuasion of those who hated the zeal and abilities of the Alexandrian bishop, issued orders again for his expulsion. The bishops, who in the councils of Arles and Milan had opposed the degradation of Athanasius, were required to subscribe his sentence; and a formulary of consent was transmitted to the absent bishops, who, upon their refusal to subscribe it, were immediately banished by the emperor. George, of Cappadocia, was then placed on the episcopal throne; and the exiled archbishop was assaulted at midnight, by the troops of the empire, in the church of St. Theonas, while he was performing his devotions. He continued his employment during the time when the doors of the sanctuary were assailed; and,

when they were at length burst open, with great intrepidity refused to consult his own safety, till he had provided for that of his congregation. Six years he remained concealed among the monks of the deserts of Thebais, notwithstanding the vigilance of his pursuers, and the force of the most severe edicts against all who should protect or conceal the deserter. The accession of Julian, who granted the exiled bishops leave to return, restored Athanasius to his see, which became vacant by the death of George, the second usurper. As the zeal of Athanasius was not agreeable to the Emperor (who again issued orders for his exile and apprehension,) he was once more so fortunate as to escape to his former recess, where he continued till the reign of Jovian, and again assumed the government of his church. Under Valens he was banished once more, and remained confined for four months; at the end of which he was again recalled, and enjoyed the tranquil possession of his see, till the year 373, when his death put a period to a series of incessant exertions in the cause of the church.

The zeal of Athanasius in the orthodox cause occasioned his composing a number of writings against the heresy of Arius and Appollinaris; several discourses and letters in justification of himself; and also the life of St. Anthony. Many of his performances are lost, but sufficient remain to form a splendid edition of three folio volumes by the learned Montfaucon.

Basil the Great, bishop of Cæsarea, was one of the most amiable and accomplished characters of the fourth century. Eloquent, ingenious, and learned, he was surpassed, and even equalled, by few. He studied in the schools of Cæsarea and Constantinople, and then repaired to Athens to perfect himself in the sciences. In this situation he contracted a strict intimacy with the amiable Gregory Nazienzen, whose father was the bishop of that city. After some time employed in assisting his father in the duties of his office, Gregory again joined his friend, who had retired with a few select associates into the solitudes of Pontus, where, in mutual study and reciprocal esteem, they passed a considerable time. Gregory quitted his solitude once more to assist his father; and, after several vicissitudes, was advanced by Theodosius to the bishopric of Constantinople, which, on account of the people objecting to his being a stranger, he soon resigned; and, after some time spent in attending to clerical duties in his native city, retired to the country, where he died. During this time Basil had consented to leave his retreat, after having established the monastic state in Pontus and Cappadocia, and accepted the see of Cæsarea. His attachment to the Nicene faith was marked and sincere. He



separated from communion with his bishop Dranius, who had subscribed the confession at Ariminum, and steadily opposed the entreaties and threatenings of the emperor Valens to embrace the opinions of Arius. The works of these friends are numerous. Basil composed several sermons; a reply to the doctrines of the Arian Eunomius; a work upon the divinity of the Holy Ghost; several letters, some homilies, and a commentary upon the first sixteen chapters of Isaiah. Gregory Nazianzen composed many excellent discourses, letters, and some poems. Gregory, bishop of Nyssa, the brother of Basil, far from imitating the examples of his brother and friend, had married, and was with great difficulty induced to forsake the profession of rhetoric for the ecclesiastical state. His promotion in the church, however, very soon succeeded that of his brother, and, like him, he was distinguished by his steady attachment to the orthodox cause. He composed commentaries upon Scripture; discourses upon the mysteries and upon morality; panegyrics upon saints; a controversial tract against Eunomius, and several other works.

The remarkable story of Ambrose, bishop of Milan, has an appearance of romance seldom found in real life. This prelate was the prefect of Liguria and Emilia, and on entering the church of Milan in his civil capacity, to quell a riot between the Arian and orthodox parties, concerning the choice of a bishop, found himself called upon to assume the vacant office by the unanimous voice of the assembly, and was compelled to advance at once from the humble station of catechumen to the command of the church. In this high situation, he firmly sustained the cause of orthodoxy against the Arians of his diocese, against the entreaties and threats of the empress Justina, the mother of Valentinian, and even of the emperor Theodosius, whom he prevented from establishing a Jewish synagogue at Milan, and from erecting an altar to Victory. His zeal did not rest here; he rebuked the emperor for his slaughter at Thessalonica, and compelled him to atone for his guilt, by the performance of public penance. But Ambrose was loud in the praises of a monastic life, and uncharitable in his conduct towards those who differed from him in religious belief. With a credulity which bordered upon folly, or with a design to impose upon the credulity of mankind (a practice not very uncommon in those times,) he pretended to the Arians to produce men possessed with devils; who, upon the approach of certain relics, had been compelled to acknowledge the purity of the Nicene faith, and the impiety of that of Arius. Ambrose composed several treatises in praise of celibacy; a discourse

upon Mysteries and Penance; several books concerning Faith, and the Holy Ghost; a discourse upon the Incarnation; and several other works, which have been published in two volumes folio.

The eloquence of Lactantius, and the beauty and purity of his style, raise him superior to every author of the fourth century, and place him upon an equality with some of the most accomplished writers of ancient Rome. Entrusted with the education of Crispus, the unfortunate son of Constantine, whom the monarch afterwards put to death, Lactantius, amidst the splendors of a court, was distinguished only by his talents and his poverty. His principal work consists of a masterly refutation of Paganism, and a learned comparison between it and Christianity. It is to the indelible disgrace of the age, that while a number of fanatic monks and popular declaimers obtained the highest stations in the church, a man who possessed the learning of Aristotle, with the eloquence of Cicero, and the wit of Horace—who united philosophy with religion, and an earnest piety with all the graces of a polished taste and enlightened understanding—should be permitted to languish without distinction or reward. It is however but too common a case, that the service which is rendered to a party, is rated higher than that which is rendered to mankind in general. The defence of a signal dogma shall raise a man to eminence and fortune; while the enlightening of thousands, the improving of the hearts, the morals, the judgments, and religious sentiments of a nation, shall frequently be passed over, with scarcely the cold return of fruitless praise.

The close of the fourth century, and the beginning of the fifth, was distinguished by the writings and example of the learned Jerom, a monk of Palestine; and the celebrated Augustin, bishop of Hippo. Deeply versed in sacred literature, and entirely devoted to study, Jerom consented to receive the order of priesthood, only upon condition that he should not be compelled to perform any of its offices; and for several years pursued, by turns, a sequestered and active life. After the death of his friend Damasus, bishop of Rome, Jerom retired to a small cell in Bethlehem, where the reputation of his learning and sanctity attracted the notice, and procured him the visits, of the pious and distinguished ladies Paula, Eustochium, and Melania; and these were soon accompanied by numbers who were desirous of embracing a monastic life. Paula, in order to gratify this pious desire, so strongly encouraged by the example and precepts of Jerom, erected on the spot a church and four monasteries, the former



for the men, and the latter for the women. The warmth and austerity of his temper, the mixture of enthusiasm and superstition in all his sentiments and conduct, and the contempt and invectives which he poured upon all who differed from him, are blemishes in the character of Jerom. In his retirement he composed a considerable number both of critical and theological writings; several commentaries upon Scripture; two Latin translations of the Bible, and a variety of other productions. He was engaged in a controversy with Rufinus, a priest of Aquileia, concerning the works of Origen, the particular opinions of whom were warmly defended by Rufinus. In one instance, however, both Jerom and Rufinus agreed: The former encouraged the superstitious folly of Paula, who forsook her family and country for the conversation of monks and ecclesiastics in distant regions; and Rufinus himself accompanied Melania, another of these wandering saints, in her visits to the hermits of the Egyptian deserts, and remained during twenty-five years in her house at Jerusalem. The learning of Rufinus, though very considerable, was, however, inferior to that of Jerom. He translated several of the Greek authors into Latin; composed two books of Ecclesiastical History, in continuation of that of Eusebius; commentaries upon several parts of Scripture, and a number of other works.

Augustin, bishop of Hippo, adopted in early youth, with a warmth congenial to his native country Africa, the opinions of the Manicheans. His sentiments, however, began to waver in a conference he held with Faustus, a professor of that sect, when he was about twenty-nine years of age; and the sermons of Ambrose, bishop of Milan, the conversion of two of his friends, and the perusal of St. Paul's Epistles, fully convinced him of the errors of that sect. On his return to Africa, from which he had been absent some years in different parts of Italy, he was ordained priest by Valerius, bishop of Hippo, founded a monastery for persons who renounced private property and lived in common, and was ordained coadjutor to Valerius in 395. He died at the age of seventy-six. His works, which are more numerous than those of any other writer of this period, bear the marks of sincere piety, vivacity, and genius; but are chargeable with ambiguity, and the impulse of a too warm imagination.\* The opinions of Origen, who was claimed as an associate, at different times, both by the orthodox and Arian parties, had a zealous patron in the bishop of Hippo, for being a warm Platonist, he

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\* He was a zealous advocate for the doctrine of predestination.

adopted every opinion of that philosopher, which could be reconciled with Christianity. He composed commentaries upon Scripture; sermons on a variety of subjects; discourses on the doctrines and discipline of the church, several books of controversy; and an incredible number of other performances.

One of the most considerable writers of this period is John, bishop of Constantinople, who flourished towards the close of the fourth, or the beginning of the fifth century. He was a native of Antioch, and obtained from his eloquence the name of Chrysostom. An assembly of bishops having resolved to enrol him in their body, he retired to the summit of a mountain in company with an old man; and afterwards entirely secluded himself in a dreary cave from all converse with mankind. After remaining for some years in solitude, he returned to Antioch, where his reputation as a preacher became so great, that he was by general consent, elected patriarch of Constantinople. The ordination of Chrysostom was, however, secretly opposed by Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, who was deputed by the emperor to officiate in this ceremony, and whose fear of the monarch was too great to permit his refusal of the office. At this time the Constantinopolitan Arians were prohibited from holding their assemblies in the city, and departed from it every Saturday night or Sunday morning, reciting such hymns as were consonant to their doctrines. Chrysostom, sensible of the effect of such spectacles upon the minds of the common people, turned against them their own arts, and dispatched singers through the streets, preceded by the cross and by lamps. In one of those processions the different parties met, and blows and a considerable tumult ensued; upon which, the emperor required from the Arians, either their conversion to orthodoxy, or their exile from the city. They preferred the latter. The enemies of Chrysostom, amongst whom was the empress Eudoxia, who was offended at his censuring the corrupt manners of the ladies in general, or perhaps displeased at his admonitions having been personally, publicly, and rather roughly addressed to her, conjointly with Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who was offended at his interference in a dispute between him and the Nitrian monks, soon afterwards obtained his deposition; but the sedition consequent upon his banishment was so great, that the emperor was compelled to send him letters of recall. His implacable enemy, the empress, again irritated by his preaching against the public games around her statue, once more effected his banishment. He was not suffered to remain in peace in the place to which he had repaired in his exile, but received order from the emperor to transport himself



to the ungenial shores of the Euxine sea. The place of his banishment, however, he never reached; for he was seized with a violent fever on the road, which terminated his life in the sixtieth year of his age, in 407. Chrysostom is justly ranked amongst the most eminent Christian orators; his eloquence was manly, his genius was uncommon, and his erudition extensive. He exhibited himself both as a moral and controversial writer; wrote a great number of homilies; and his works are so extensive, as to have been collected into eleven folio volumes.

The religious controversies, which engaged in some measure the pens of the most accomplished writers of the fourth century, attracted the notice of men equally zealous, but not equally qualified, and produced several performances differing in merit according to the abilities of their respective authors. Marcellus, bishop of Ancyra, and Eustathius, bishop of Antioch, though both of them intimate friends of Athanasius, were accused of Sabellianism, but wrote against the Arian cause. They were however both deposed, as their principles were judged, by the Synods appointed to try them, to be not perfectly orthodox. Victorinus engaged in defence of the church, and attacked both the Arians and Manicheans. Amongst the most strenuous opposers of heresy, was Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, who, from being a heathen, had been converted to Christianity. He composed a very extensive work against the Arians, which he had the spirit to present in person to the emperor Constantius; and wrote several commentaries upon different parts of the sacred writings. The compositions of the two Apollinariss', in defence of Christianity, were written in such a style of elegance, that the emperor Julian prohibited the reading of their books. The writing of Ephraim of Edessa against heresy, as well as his moral performances, appear in his own time to have been much esteemed.

The commentators of this century were many; amongst whom was the blind but learned Didymus, whose commentaries are lost. Diodorus, bishop of Tarsus, wrote commentaries also, which are ranked amongst those of the judicious few, who attempted to explain the literal sense of Scripture, without attending to the allegorical.

The lives of the monks became so acceptable, from the estimation in which they were held, that a multitude of romances, under that denomination, were produced in the fourth century; pretended to be authentic records of these deluded devotees. Epiphanius published a history of heresies, in which, not content with exhibiting and exaggerating erroneous opinions, he

attempted to refute them, and to establish the doctrines of the church. This writer is charged with inaccuracy and extreme credulity; a credulity too of the worst sort, since it led him to believe every unfavorable account of those who dissented from his faith.

A multitude of writers, whose compositions were fewer in number, or who did not obtain the same celebrity with those already enumerated, flourished during this century: amongst these was Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, who, in his youth, composed discourses for the catechumens, and for those who were newly baptized.



## CHAPTER VI.

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### THE FIFTH CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—OF GOVERNMENT, DOCTRINE, RITES, AND CEREMONIES, IN THE FIFTH CENTURY.—OF THE SECTS WHICH APPEARED IN THE FIFTH CENTURY.—OF LEARNING AND LEARNEDMEN IN THE FIFTH CENTURY.

THE calamities arising from an intollerant zeal in matters of religion, not less severe than the terrors of persecution which had afflicted the Christians of the preceding century, continued in this to disturb the happiness of mankind, and to induce the sincere professors of the gospel to look back almost with regret to a season which, however unfavorable and perilous, found them united in one common cause, generally understood; instead of being divided into factions, disagreeing about points difficult to be conceived, and respecting which the difference frequently consisted not in the circumstance itself, but in the terms used to define it. Alarmed at the ecclesiastical censures which assailed whoever presumed to differ in opinion, or even in expression, from the leaders of the church, the timid Christian must have been afraid of conversing upon the subject of his faith; and the edict obtained from Honorius, by four bishops deputed from Carthage, in 410, which doomed to death whoever differed from the Catholic faith, must, though perhaps never executed, have closed in terror and silence the trembling lips. Doubtless a mistaken zeal for promoting the cause of true religion, instigated the generality to believe it right to enforce the truth, not only by ecclesiastical censures, but by the interference of the civil power. Augustin acknowledged, that there had been a time when he believed it wrong to harass heretics, and that it would be more judicious to allure them by soft and gentle methods; but that his sentiments were changed, from observing, that the laws enacted against heresy by the emperors had proved, to many, an un-

happy occasion of conversion. These detestable principles were carried to such excess, that, in 443, Theodosius commanded that the books which were not conformable in doctrine to the councils of Nice and Ephesus, and to the decisions of Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, should be destroyed, and their concealers be liable to death.

Under the united reigns of the two sons of Theodosius, Arcadius and Honorius, who separately governed the eastern and western divisions of the Roman empire, a season of tranquility took place, which was only interrupted by theological commotions. The death of Arcadius, in the year 403, placed his son Theodosius, at eight years of age, upon the Imperial throne, who governed the eastern division of the empire while his uncle Honorius reigned in the west. The timid emperor of the west, alarmed at the incursions of the Barbarians, who poured down in swarms upon his dominions, and revelled in the delightful regions of Italy, had his retreat at Ravenna disturbed by the intelligence that Alaric, the Gothic king, had besieged Rome; nor was it long before the fierce conqueror entered its gates, and plundered that city, which for ages had been a repository for the plunder of the world. The remainder of Italy soon became a prey to the ravages of the victorious army. During this period, though the most ancient and valuable monuments of art and learning were levelled with the ground, the churches of the Christians of every denomination were spared by this Arian invader; and not only life, but even liberty, was granted both to the Pagans and Christians who took refuge in the churches of the apostles, or at the tombs of the martyrs. The sacred vessels which had been pillaged from the church of St. Peter, were also restored by the conquerors. The subjects of Honorius, after a series of ineffectual contests against the desolating power of the Barbarians, had the mortification to see him nearly stripped of his territory, and continuing the title without the power of royalty. The capital was taken by the Goths; the Huns were possessed of Pannonia; the Alans, Suevi, and Vandals, were established in Spain; and the Burgundians settled in Gaul. The feeble powers of Valentinian the Third, the successor of Honorius, were not calculated to restore to the Roman monarchs the empire they had lost. Eudocia, his widow, and the daughter of Theodosius, soon married Maximus; and soon discovered that the present partner of her throne and bed was the brutal murderer of the last. Incensed at his perfidy, and resolved to revenge the death of Valentinian, and her own dishonor, she implored assistance from Genseric, king of the Vandals in Africa, who entered Rome, and plundered the whole of the



city except three churches. After the rapid and turbulent reigns of several of the emperors of the west, that part of the empire was finally subjugated in the year 476, by the abdication of Augustulus. The name of Emperor sunk with the ruin of the empire; for the conquering Odoacer, general of the Heruli, assumed only the title of King.

Notwithstanding the commotions which afflicted the empire and the church, Christianity still continued to extend her boundaries. The truths of the Gospel were propagated through a considerable part of Persia, by Maruthas, a Mesopotamian, and Abdas, a Persian bishop, who afterwards involved the Christians in a severe persecution, by his temerity in destroying a temple belonging to the Magi, and his obstinacy in not rebuilding it. This persecution continued for some time, and was not terminated without a war between the Persians and the Romans. The most considerable accessions to the Christian body, during this century, accrued from the barbarous nations which poured with the impetuosity of a torrent over every part of the western empire. The Goths had indeed professed Christianity before their irruption; but the greater part of these savage invaders did not relinquish the worship of their gods, till they were established in the conquered countries, when Arianism was professed by the greater part of the western Christians. During the course of this century, Ireland was added to the countries which had already embraced the truths of Christianity. The first missionary, Palladius, was not successful amongst this rude and uncultivated people; but he might probably prepare them to receive favorably the documents of Saccathus, or Patrick, a native of Caledonia, a man of birth and abilities, who, after the laborious efforts of forty years for their conversion, founded the archbishopric of Armagh. One of the most remarkable conversions of the fifth century is that of Clovis, king of the Franks, who is said to have embraced Christianity, in consequence of a vow to worship Christ as his God, provided he rendered him victorious in a battle which he was preparing to engage in against the Alemanni. Probably his conversion might result at least as much from policy as superstition. By adopting the religious tenets of those whom he governed, he destroyed one capital cause of disunion. However this might have been, many miraculous circumstances were said to have attended this conversion of the conqueror, who founded the kingdom of the Franks in Gaul. On the occasion of his baptism at Rheims, a brilliant light filled the whole church; and a voice was heard to say, *Peace be with you; it is I: be not afraid: abide in my love.* This prodigy was succeeded by a fragrant odour which perfumed

the whole place, and a dove descended, bearing a vial of chrism,\* with which Clovis was annointed.† This monarch was the only one of the Barbarian invaders of the Roman empire, who immediately professed the faith of the council of Nice; and from this circumstance, the appellation of the Most Christian King, and Eldest Son of the church, was, according to the opinion of the learned, conferred originally upon the sovereigns of France.

Riches and independence, so little conducive to virtue in the hearts of men, were evidently pernicious to the clergy, who, from the time when they became possessed of great revenues under the Christian emperors, were no longer distinguished by the humble virtues of the primitive Christians; but by ardent aspirations and mean artifices to obtain temporal power. The episcopal offices were, in several instances, performed by delegates; whilst the bishop, who assumed the name, and received the emoluments annexed to that office, was left at leisure to attend to his secular concerns, and to dissipate in voluptuousness what had been frequently acquired by contention and chicanery. The richer ecclesiastics not only vied in splendor with the prince; they not only erected thrones in their churches, and affected the state of courts, in giving audience to the people; but they frequently asserted a perfect equality with the monarch. Martin, bishop of Tours, contended, at a public entertainment, that the emperor was inferior in dignity to a presbyter: and Anastasius, the emperor of the east, met with frequent instances of similar arrogance. Symmachus had the assurance to tell him, that the dignity of a Roman prelate, nay, even of a priest, was superior to that of the emperor, in proportion as the dignity of things spiritual was to that of things temporal.

The ecclesiastics of every denomination united in invading the rights of the people; and in increasing, by every possible expedient, the power and dignity of the sacerdotal order: they employed also, without compunction, the most unlawful means in order to controvert each other, and to obtain fresh accessions of influence to their respective sees. Amongst the most ambitious claimants of prerogative and spiritual power, the see of Rome soon became the most distinguished; it affected to receive all appeals that were preferred in ecclesiastical cases; endeavored to be considered as umpire in the dispute,

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\* A composition of olive oil and balm; *opobalsanum*.

† This piece of legerdemain, which Baronius has dignified with the name of a miracle, was exhibited in favor of a monarch, who was ferocious, sanguinary, and ambitious, and the murderer of several of his nearest relations.



and by its decisions to determine every clerical cause. The bishops of Africa warmly opposed these encroachments of the Roman see; and contested the authority which the pope pretended to derive, for this end, from a decree of the Nicene Council, but which was not in their copies of the acts of that synod. They refused to re-admit Apianus, an African priest, who, upon being excommunicated by his bishop, had appealed to the Roman pontiff, by whom he had been received into communion, and who attempted to restore him to his former station in the church. Intriguing for the principal episcopal offices become common; and it frequently happened, that, upon the demise of a bishop, his see was claimed by two or more contenders, who endeavored to enforce their pretensions by every martial exertion. The pulpit beat to arms, and the church appeared a theatre of war, in which the angry combatants assailed each other with implacable rancor and fury. The see of Alexandria was remarkable for an almost uninterrupted succession of profligate prelates, who obtained their stations by the most atrocious means. Timotheus, after having caused his predecessor to be murdered in the church, his dead body dragged through the city, and the mangled carcase then thrown into the fire, obtained the bishopric by his artifice in creeping about in the dark, and pretending to be an angel, that he might delude the monks, and obtain the object of his wishes. The splendor of the principal sees under the Christian emperors, and the great possibility of their being attained by the illiterate and the ignorant, since knowledge was far from being requisite for admission into the priesthood, were causes which greatly contributed to the evils we are now lamenting.\* Incentives were by these means offered to the indolent enthusiast, as well as the ignorant and ambitious, to enter into the clerical order; to which they might be ordained without the trouble of preparing, or any examination, since none was made: and without finding it necessary to engage in any regular ecclesiastical duty. Hence, if knavishly disposed, each had, in the possession of his order, a passport from city to city; in each of which he might carry on the lucrative business of vending the pretended relics of the saints and martyrs to an ignorant and deluded multitude.

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\* Several of the fathers of the church, who attended the councils of Ephesus, and Chalcedon, towards the middle of this century, were so ignorant as to be unable to write their own names to the acts of the Councils, but were compelled to subscribe in this form: *I, such an one, have subscribed by the hand of such an one, because I cannot write.* Or, *Such a bishop having said that he could not write, I, whose name is underwritten, have subscribed for him.*

The emperors, who, in the last century, had constituted themselves heads of the church, and had suffered themselves to be addressed by the impious titles of your divinity, your eternity, your godship, supreme master, and everlasting king, had still reserved to themselves the supreme ecclesiastical power; and in concert with the authority of councils, in which the legislative power of the church immediately resided, sometimes augmented, and sometimes depressed, the authority of the contending and ambitious prelates. Two general or œcumenical councils were held, during this century, at Ephesus and at Chalcedon. In the latter, the bishop of Constantinople, who had reduced under his spiritual subjection several extensive provinces, was confirmed in the same privileges he had obtained in the council of Constantinople, and was considered as in all respects equal to his haughty rival, the bishop of Rome. But this regulation was little agreeable to the Roman pontiff, who saw his superiority invaded, and his dignity abased, with but little hope of obtaining redress, since the authority of the emperor was exerted in favor of his rival. He submitted not, however, silently to decisions which abrogated his rights, but opposed with energy the obstinate claims of the bishop of Constantinople to spiritual dominion. The contests which arose in consequence of the council of Chalcedon, fortunately supplied Felix the third, bishop of Rome, with a pretence for opposing his brother of Constantinople. This prelate had treated with contempt the decrees of that council, though it had confirmed to him the patriarchal power; and had manifested a desire to serve rather than to distress the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch, the great leaders of the anathematized sects of the Monophysites. This afforded a pretext for convening a council, in which the Byzantine patriarch was condemned, who, in his turn, anathematized and excommunicated the bishop of Rome, erased his name from the public diptychs,\* and mutual animosities inflamed the eastern and western churches for a series of years. The avowed causes of dispute were generally a zeal for the decision of councils, or for the support of particular opinions; and under these pretences, the supremacy, which was unceasingly aimed at by the Roman pontiff, was opposed by the bishop of Constantinople, who, from similar motives, was opposed by the bishop of Rome, in all his claims to spiritual dominion. On this account every measure was devised, which could fo-

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\* The Diptychs were originally public registers, in which the names of the consuls and other principal magistrates among the Romans were inscribed.—The Diptychs of the church contained the names of the bishops, and other distinguished persons.



ment or increase any disturbance between the prelates of Constantinople and those who were subject to their jurisdiction. Every complaint, made by the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch against the patriarch of Constantinople, or even by the inferior orders of the clergy in those dioceses against their spiritual rulers, was received at Rome, and the complainants taken under the immediate protection of that see.

The aspiring views of Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem, were directed to the attainment of patriarchal power; and the protection of the younger Theodosius, enabled him to reject the authority of his metropolitan, the bishop of Cæsarea, and to assume the dignity of patriarch of Palestine, in which he was afterwards confirmed. The principal reason assigned for this assumption, was, that the church of Jerusalem had always deservedly received a high degree of veneration, from its having succeeded to the first Christian society founded by the Apostles; and had in itself an innate and incontrovertible claim to the privileges it required. The church of Antioch suffered still further from the increasing spirit of ambition and zeal for episcopal honors. Instigated by these motives, and availing himself of the prevalent spirit of superstition, Anthemius, bishop of Salamis, affected to have discovered, by revelation, the body of Saint Barnabas, which had upon its breast the gospel of Saint Matthew, in Greek, transcribed by Saint Barnabas himself. This discovery he made use of, to prove that his see being founded by Barnabas, was an Apostolic Church, no less than that of Antioch; and, as such, ought not to be subject to that patriarch: so powerful a plea procured him an exemption. The churches of Antioch and Alexandria soon began also to suffer from the usurpations and claims of the Constantinopolitan and Jerusalem prelates, and particularly of the former, who arrogantly reduced them under his jurisdiction.

A detail of the artifices made use of by the patriarchs, for the attainment of spiritual powers, would be little edifying, and may be easily conceived. They encroached upon the rights of the bishops, whom they considered as delegated by them, and in all respects amenable to their authority. This power they contrived to augment by artfully exciting quarrels between the bishops and the inferior ministers, and between the clergy and people, each of whom referred the dispute to their decision. To complete their spiritual tyranny, they contracted an alliance, founded in mutual interest, with a band of crafty, of insolent, and unprincipled monks.

The authority of the Roman prelates in the west had been considerably increased by the supineness of the emperors, and

the grant which had been obtained by the ambitious Leo, from Valentinian, that all the western bishops should be subject to his jurisdiction. Their power was not diminished by the dominion of the barbarous nations, who, perceiving the subjection of the people to the clergy, and the dependence of the clergy upon the Roman pontiff, soon became sensible, that by augmenting his power they secured their own.

The appointment of legates from the Pope,\* who about the middle of this century first began to reside at the court of Constantinople, doubtless originated from motives extremely opposite to those which are avowed. Leo recommended to the emperor Marcian a person named Julian, who was established by him to solicit at the emperor's court whatever related to the faith and peace of the church against heretics. But a regard to faith and discipline was doubtless not the sole object of their attention. The bishop of Rome was too much interested in the prosperity of his see, not to be very sedulous in observing every circumstance relating to the other prelates (particularly his brother of Constantinople,) which might be prejudicial to his own interest and dignity. The tender concern of these reverend brethren was indeed exerted to promote good order in every part of the Christian world; and was charitably extended so far beyond the limits of ecclesiastical authority, that they frequently interfered in matters of civil jurisdiction. Valentinian promulgated a law which restrained their power to spiritual and ecclesiastical causes; but, in these authority extended to all ranks and degress of men.

Notwithstanding the depravity and corruption which pervaded the clerical body, the whole was not contaminated. Instances of disinterested virtue, which would have reflected splendor upon the most enlightened periods of society, illuminated the dreary and dismal annals of the fifth century. We behold with veneration and with pleasure the liberal Deogratias, bishop of Carthage, selling the costly plate of the Church for the ransom of a number of captives, who had been brought by Geisericus, the Vandalic king, to the shores of Africa, where they were to be torn from every dear and social connection. We accompany him with delight to his church, filled with beds of straw for the accommodation of the wretched strangers; and with transport behold this aged and infirm prelate daily comforting the sick, giving food to the hungry, and medicines to the diseased. Nor was this a solitary instance of public and private virtue: it was even exceeded by Acacius, bishop of

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\* The name *Papa* (Pope) was originally given to all bishops, and even sometimes to the inferior clergy.



Amida, who ransomed seven thousand Persian captives perishing with hunger. History, amongst her disagreeable obligations has to record much of the vices of mankind—for vice, if it does not preponderate in the scale, is generally more apparent and obtrusive than virtue—has sometimes the delight of exhibiting characters which dignify and exalt human nature. The erudition, piety, and truly Christian charity of Atticus, bishop of Constantinople, who distributed liberally not only to the orthodox, but to the necessitous heretics—the still greater mildness of Proclus, his friend and disciple, towards the heretics, and his active as well as passive virtues—the piety, simplicity, and affability of Sicinius, a Constantinopolitan prelate—are instances of human excellence, which it is pleasant to record, and may serve as models worthy of imitation to more refined and succeeding ages.

Though the bishops of Rome, partly by the force of an ancient prejudice in favor of that imperial city, and partly by the wealth and power of that church, had in the preceding century been enabled to assume a degree of superiority over the other metropolitan churches; and though the council of Constantinople had raised the bishop of that see to an equality of power and authority with the Roman prelate, yet the title of Patriarch does not appear to have been regularly conferred upon them till the meeting of the council of Chalcedon, in 451; nor were the jurisdiction and dignity of the patriarchal sees, before that period, properly established and defined. The patriarchal dignity was also obtained by the bishops of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem; but these latter were held in an inferior light to those of Rome and Constantinople. The title of Exarch was conferred upon those who had the inspection of the affairs of the Church, in certain provinces.

Few, if any, alterations took place during this century, in the state of the clergy; if we except the monks, who daily increased both in consequence and in fanaticism. Originally subject to the bishop of the diocese, they could not even choose their own superior without his consent. This privilege was, however, towards the beginning of this century, obtained by most of the communities; and it was soon followed by an exemption from episcopal jurisdiction. When indeed the Popes acquired the power of granting these exemptions, they frequently gave or sold them to the monks, whose power consequently increased with that of the Roman see, and whose attachment to its interest was by this means secured. In the fifth century, the monastic orders did not all observe the same form of discipline; but in one respect they nearly agreed, which was in a general defection from real

virtue, and the practice of such licentiousness as became proverbial. The prelates at the council of Chalcedon, in 451, complained of Barsumas the monk, who had murdered Flavian, his bishop, that he had overturned all Syria, and brought against them a thousand monks. In 452, Theodocius, a monk, on pretence of maintaining orthodoxy, incited the monks of Palestine to rise, filled Jerusalem with tumults, set fire to several houses, broke open jails, murdered a bishop, with some other persons, and caused himself to be elected bishop of Jerusalem.

The approbation of monastic institutions was not only extensively diffused, and numbers made unhappy from the defection of their relations, and the consequent loss of their support; but the more judicious part of the community had the mortification to observe, that, as the numbers who embraced the state of monachism sensibly increased, so also monastic folly increased in the same proportion. In the beginning of this century a new order of monks was instituted by a person of the name of Alexander, who obtained the name of Watchers, from their method of performing divine service without any intermission. They divided themselves into three classes, which relieved each other at stated hours; and by that means continued, without any interval, a perpetual course of divine service. Amongst the Mystics, many not only affected to reside with wild and savage beasts but imitated their manners. With a ferocious aspect they traversed the gloomy desert, fed upon herbs and grass, or remained motionless in certain places for several years, exposed to the scorching heat of the mid-day sun, or the chilling blasts of the nocturnal air. All conversation with men was studiously avoided by these gloomy fanatics, who frequently concluded their lives by an act of violent madness, or shut themselves up in narrow and miserable dens, to howl out the remainder of their wretched existence. About the year 427, Symeon, a Syrian, introduced a refinement in mortification, by residing successively upon five pillars, of six, twelve, twenty-two, thirty-six, and lastly of forty cubits high. In this wretched state he continued during thirty-seven years of his life; and his sublime piety was at his decease eagerly emulated by one Daniel, a monk, who resided upon the top of a pillar, and died in that situation at the advanced age of eighty. With a severity of sentiment consonant to the gloomy austerity of his life, Symeon angrily condemned the clemency and humanity of Theodosius, junior, who had commanded the Christians of Antioch to rebuild for the Jews a synagogue there, which they had insolently destroyed; and his influence, arising from the reputation of his sanctity, was such.



that his arguments prevented his restoration. Such indeed was the reputation of Symeon, that he was eagerly resorted to by a multitude of pilgrims, from the remote countries of Spain, Gaul, and Britain. The pillar saints continued to preserve their celebrity in the east till the twelfth century; but this practice, like all the other extremes of monkish fanaticism, was never so general in the west.

Amongst the ingenious inventors of methods for destroying the happiness of mankind, Barradatus, a monk of Syria, and James, another of the same fraternity, have been highly distinguished for their piety and virtue. The former of these holy brethren, aspiring after a more perfect species of self-denial than he had for some time practised in a small and uncomfortable chamber; erected for himself upon the summit of a mountain, a box so contrived as not to admit of his standing in a perpendicular posture, and which, having no close cover, exposed him to all the inclemencies of the wind, the rain, and the sun. Wearied, perhaps, at length himself, or having exhausted the attention of others, by his continuance in this station, he again attempted to excite it by fresh devices. For this purpose he contrived to be raised from this supine posture, and continually stood upright, covered with a garment of skin, with only a small aperture in his box sufficient to allow of his drawing his breath, and stretching out his hands to heaven. His contemporary, James, not less disposed to austerity, fed entirely upon Lentils, dragged about a heavy load of iron chains bound about his waist and neck, from which several others were suspended. During three days and nights, in which, in continued prostration, he offered up his prayers, this admired maniac was so covered with the snow as to be scarcely discernible. False miracles were perpetually reported, to complete the triumph of fanaticism, and the total infatuation of the multitude; and they were referred to, by some of the most eminent Fathers of the church, not only as examples of Christian perfection, but as infallible authorities for the validity of particular doctrines.

The principles of Christianity, no longer distinguished by their simplicity, good sense, and sound philosophy, were in this century still more embarrassed by intricate disputes, subtle explanations, and rash decisions. The Platonic doctrines, aided by the approbation and opinions of Origen, continued still to be maintained by considerable numbers; but this system, at the time that Origenism was condemned, was deserted by numbers, who were desirous of avoiding the imputation of those errors; and the philosophy of Aristotle was embraced in its place, and compounded in the same manner with the doctrine of revelation.

The prevailing attachment to logical discussions, subtle distinctions, and captious sophisms, contributed to increase the fondness for the Aristotelian philosophy which was more calculated for these ends than even Platonism had been. Composed of artificial and learned jargon, of obscure, doubtful, and undefined terms, it involved not only the ignorant and illiterate, but the ingenious and inquisitive, in intricate disputes concerning unintelligible terms, and entangled them in an inextricable labyrinth of words.

An increasing veneration for the Virgin Mary had taken place in the preceding century; and, very early in this, an opinion was industriously propagated, that she had manifested herself to several persons, and had wrought considerable miracles in support of the consubstantial party. Her image, holding in her arms the infant Jesus, together with the images of those who during their residence on earth had acquired the reputation of superior sanctity, was honored with a distinguished situation in the church, and in many places invoked with a peculiar species of worship, which was supposed to draw down into the images the propitious presence of the saints or celestial beings they represented. A superstitious respect began also to take place for the bread consecrated for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Its efficacy was supposed to extend as well to the body as the soul; and it was applied as a medicine in sickness, and as a preservative against every danger in traveling, whether by land or by sea. As it frequently happened that those, who believed in the efficacy of the consecrated bread, might not have provided themselves with a quantity sufficient for these emergencies, it became customary for the priests to reserve a portion to distribute according to the necessities of their superstitious flock. Several of the Christians interred a quantity of it in the sepulchres of their departed relations; and, although this practice was opposed in the council of Carthage, it still continued to be esteemed and practised not only in this, but in succeeding centuries. The increasing respect, which was paid to the elements of the sacrament, was productive of a superstitious fear of receiving them unworthily; and the memorial of the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, which had formerly been celebrated by all Christians on every Lord's day, was now attended by very few of the numberless professors of Christianity.

Amongst the alterations which took place in the discipline of the church, none was more remarkable than the suppression of all public confession of sin, by Leo the Great, in all the churches subject to his jurisdiction. These confessions, which had been formerly made by the trembling penitent before the



assembled congregation, were now appointed to be made to a single priest; a regulation which, though it artfully extended the power of the clergy over the consciences of men, considerably destroyed the rigor of ancient discipline. Penance was allowed to be performed in monasteries, or in the presence of a few individuals, and in a private place, at the discretion of a bishop. But if the external splendor of the church was in some degree lessened by this alteration, the loss was amply supplied by additional ceremonies. The method of singing anthems, one part of which was performed by the clergy, and the other by the congregation, which had been introduced into the churches of Antioch in the preceding century, was, in this, practised at Rome; and in many churches it was the custom to perform these responses night and day, without any interruption; different choir of singers continually relieving each other. The privileges of sanctuary, which had been claimed in the preceding century, were in this fully allowed by the emperor Leo. This claim has been supposed to have been materially advanced by a criminal flying for protection to a monastery, of which St. Marcellus was the abbot, who refused to surrender the refugee, though the soldiers, who surrounded the monastery during the night, waited only for the approach of morning to enter the convent, and forcibly to take possession of their victim. But a pretended miracle was interposed to declare the sanctity of this place of refuge; a fire was seen to issue from the top of the building, which like flashes of lightning darted its rays on the impious soldiery, and impelled them trembling to lay down their arms, and immediately to implore the mercy of that Deity which they had so impiously offended.

Every splendid appendage which had graced the heathen ceremonies, was now interwoven into the fabric of Christianity. During the extended period of Paganism, superstition had entirely exhausted her talents for invention; so that, when the same spirit pervaded the minds of the Christians, they were necessarily compelled to adopt the practices of their predecessors, and to imitate their idolatry. That which had been formerly the test of Christianity, and the practice which, when avoided, exposed the primitive believer to the utmost vengeance of his enemies, was become a Christian rite; and incense, no longer considered as an abomination, smoked upon every Christian altar. The services of religion were, even in the day, performed by the light of tapers and flambeaux. The discovery of relics, as may naturally be supposed, was proportioned to the desire of obtaining them. No fewer than the remains of forty

martyrs were discovered to the pious but credulous Pulcheria, the sister of Theodosius. This princess, with her attendants, on approaching the place where these bodies, according to the revelation with which she had been favored, were deposited, had the ground broken open; and one of the emperor's retinue, upon thrusting a reed into the chasm, and drawing it up again, was delighted with its exquisite odour. The princess accompanied by the bishop, then approached, and discovered a considerable quantity of precious ointment, and two silver boxes which contained the inestimable relics of the martyrs, which she honored with a magnificent shrine, and deposited near the remains of the holy Thyrsus, who, she believed, had thrice appeared to her for the purpose of discovering the place where the martyrs were interred. The undecayed body of the prophet Zachariah was likewise said to have been found, in consequence of a revelation from himself, after he had been interred about twelve hundred years; and the relics of Samuel were removed by Arcadus from Jerusalem to Constantinople. The pretended remains of St. Stephen, of Nicodemus, of Gamaliel, and of several others, made their appearance about the same time; but the exhibition in detail of such knavery and folly, as accompanied these transactions, would afford little amusement, and still less advantage. The account of the seven persons who fled from the persecution of Decius into a solitary cave near Ephesus (where, after a repose of an hundred and ninety-five years, they awaked as vigorous, and in appearance as youthful, as when they entered it) is familiar to all, and will not in this enlightened age be considered as a matter which admits of dispute. One of the miracles of this century, however, appears to occupy a better ground; and much controversy has arisen concerning the orthodox confessors, who after having been deprived of their tongues by the orders of Hunneric, were all, except two of them, enabled to proclaim aloud the triumphs of orthodoxy over the imperfect faith of the Arians. Attested as this anecdote is by respectable witnesses, we can scarcely doubt the fact: but our belief of the *miracle* will be at least suspended, by the consideration that two of these confessors did not again attain the faculty of speech; and the knowledge that instances have occurred, in which persons who were deprived of a part of their tongues were still able to utter intelligible sounds. Whoever indeed considers the nature of the miracles during the fifth century; that it was a period of credulity and ignorance; that the most eminent Fathers of the church were not ashamed to propagate any story which was calculated to confirm the faith of the multitude; that unlike the first preach-



ers of Christianity, they related circumstances which they saw not themselves, but received from different, and frequently disagreeing narrators; that they had much to gain by the propagation of false miracles, and little to fear from their detection; that they advanced their own reputation for piety, and their own interests, by deception; and that miracles were wrought, not for the advancement of pure and genuine Christianity, but to dignify obscure doctrines, or to exalt the character of some pretended saint; in short, that every mark which authenticated the miracles of Christ and his Apostles, is wanting in these; will probably be inclined not merely to hesitate in his assent to them, but will rather be disposed to reject them altogether.

The compliance with every Pagan superstition which could be at all reconciled with Christianity, was extended on all occasions to the utmost excess. Amongst others, the Christians attempted to obtain a knowledge of futurity, by methods similar to those employed by the Pagans, who used to divine by opening the books of Virgil; and the first verses which arrested their attention were interpreted into a prediction of their destiny. The accidental prognostication of the future greatness of Adrian, who opened at the words *Missus in Imperium magnum*; and of Alexander Severus, who had a similar fortune, had conferred additional credit upon this mode of divination. Instead however of divining by the *Sortes Virgilianæ*, the Christians made use of a Bible for the same purpose; and the practice was carried so far, that many of the inferior clergy found in it a very lucrative trade. By the higher ranks it was however strongly opposed; and a decree was passed, in 465, by the council of Vannes, enacting that whoever was detected in the practice, should be excluded from communion with the church. The pilgrimages to the tombs of the martyrs continued to increase in respectability during this century; and almost the commencement of it was remarkable for a procession, instituted by Chrysostom, which afforded an example, and served as a prelude, to future ceremonies of a similar nature.

Three days of fasting and supplication, before the feast of the Ascension, were instituted in France, by Mamercus, bishop of Vienne, who appropriated litanies to them, which were already in use, but not recited at any particular times; and reserved, as emergencies might require, for deprecating any impending calamity. The feast of the Ascension took place in the period of time which passed between the solemn seasons of Easter and Pentecost, and which had hitherto been observed as a season of festivity, in which all fasting and kneeling were prohibited.

This fast was far from being universally received in the western churches, and never obtained in the eastern, which always observed the fifty days between Easter and Whitsuntide, as a festival. There is some reason for believing that these rogation days were observed in Africa prior to this period; and that Mamercus was the adopter, not the institutor, of this observance. From France the custom was generally adopted, though with some variation in the time in which it was observed, and it was in the year 511 established in the council of Orleans. By degrees these litanies were commonly used on Wednesdays and Fridays in all the churches. The liturgies however still differed in different places, at the pleasure of the bishops. Peter the Fuller, bishop of Antioch, commanded that, in singing the hymn *Trisagium*, the performers should add to the words, "O God, most holy," *who hast suffered for us upon the cross!* Another instance occurs in the mission of Lupus and Germanus, who, at the desire of the orthodox, were sent into Britain to oppose Pelagianism; and who introduced there the Gallican liturgy, which materially differed from that of Rome.

It was not till towards the close of this century that the bishop of Rome was distinguished by a dress materially different from that of the other ecclesiastics. He wore upon his head a kind of bonnet, something higher than usual, and constructed like the mitres used by the priests of Cybele. But Clovis having sent to St. John of Lateran a crown of gold, with which he had been presented by Anastasius, emperor of the east, Pope Hormisdas placed it upon his bonnet. In succeeding ages this ornament was increased. Boniface the Eighth, during his contentions with Philip the Fair, in order to demonstrate the superiority of things spiritual to things temporal, and as a mark of his twofold authority, added a second crown, which in the pontificate of John XXII. received the addition of a third.

The fifth century is less remarkable than any of the preceding, for the number of those who, by the propagation of new opinions, perplexed and destroyed the tranquillity of the church. One of the earliest and most remarkable was Pelagius, a British monk, of some rank, and very exalted reputation; who, with his friend Celestius, traveled to Rome, where they resided very early in this century, and opposed with warmth the doctrines of original sin, and the necessity of divine grace.

What reception their doctrines met with at Rome, does not appear; but their uncommon piety and virtue excited general approbation. On the approach of the Goths, they retired to



Africa, where Celestius remained, with a view of gaining admittance as a presbyter into the church of Carthage. Pelagius proceeded to Palestine, where he enjoyed the favor and protection of John, bishop of Jerusalem. But his friend and his opinions met with a very different reception from Augustin, the celebrated bishop of Hippo.

Whatever parts were visited by these un-orthodox friends, they still asserted their peculiar opinions; and they were gradually engaged in a warm contest, in the course of which they were probably led to advance more than had originally occurred to them. In contending for the truth of their doctrines, they asserted, "that mankind derived no injury from the sin of Adam; that we are now as capable of obedience to the will of God, as he was; that, otherwise, it would have been cruel and absurd to propose to mankind the performance of certain duties, with the sanction of rewards, and the denunciation of punishments; and that consequently men are born without vice, as well as without virtue." Pelagius is said moreover to have maintained, "that it is possible for men, provided they fully employ the powers and faculties with which they are endued, to live without sin;" and though he did not deny, that external grace, or the doctrines and motives of the Gospel, are necessary, he is said to have rejected the necessity of internal grace, or the aids of the Divine Spirit. He acknowledged "that the power we possess of obeying the will of God, is a divine gift;" but asserted, "that the direction of this power depends upon ourselves; that natural death is not a consequence of the sin of Adam, but of the frame of man; and that Adam would have died, though he had not sinned. Isidore, Chrysostom, and Augustin strenuously opposed these opinions; and the latter procured their condemnation in a synod held at Carthage, in 412. They were, however, favorably received at Rome; and Pope Zozimus was at the head of the Pelagian party: but his decision against the African bishops, who had opposed Pelagianism, was disregarded by them, and the pontiff yielded at length to their reasonings and remonstrances, and condemned the men, whom he had before honored with his approbation. The council of Ephesus likewise condemned the opinions of Pelagius and Celestius; and the emperor Honorius, in 418, published an edict, which ordained that the leaders of the sect should be expelled from Rome, and their followers exiled. Some of the Pelagians taught that Christ was a mere man, and that men might lead sinless lives, because Christ did so—that Jesus became Christ after his baptism, and God after his resurrection; the one arising from his unction, the other from the merit of his passion. The Pelagian controversy, which

began with the doctrines of grace and original sin, was extended to predestination, and excited continual discord and division in the church.

The warmth with which Augustin opposed the doctrines of Pelagius, betrayed him into expressions which too much favored the belief, that the virtuous and evil actions of men arise from an invincible necessity in their natures; and he appeared to be of opinion, that, in the work of conversion and sanctification, all was to be attributed to a divine energy, and nothing to human agency. This opinion, though it had many favorers, was opposed by a still more considerable number, and a sect called Semi-Pelagians was founded, in which the doctrines both of Pelagius and Augustin were in part acceded to, and in part denied. Cassian, the head and founder of this sect, taught—that the first conversion of the soul to God was the effect of its free choice; consequently that no *preventing* or *predisposing* grace is bestowed by him. Different writers have described the doctrines of the Semi-Pelagians in a different manner: some represented them as maintaining, that inward grace is not necessary to the beginning of repentance, but to our progress in virtue; others say, that they acknowledge the power of grace, but contended that faith depends upon ourselves, and good works upon God: all however agree, that the Semi-Pelagians believed that predestination is made upon the foresight of good works. The five following principles have been laid down as the foundation of the the Semi-Pelagian doctrines—That God did not dispense his grace to one more than to another, in consequence of predestination, but was willing to save all, if they complied with the terms of the gospel; that Christ died for all; that the grace purchased by Christ, and necessary to salvation, was offered to all; that man, before he received grace, was capable of faith and holy desires; that man, born *free*, was consequently capable of *resisting* or *complying* with the suggestions of grace.

Notwithstanding the opposition of Augustin, the Semi-Pelagian doctrines were well received, particularly in the neighborhood of Marseilles, where Cassian had founded a monastery. They were condemned in several synods; but still continued to be professed by the eastern Christians; and were generally received in the west, till the middle of the ninth century. The disputes concerning liberty and necessity have always produced much rancor and controversy in the Christian world, and are perhaps unprofitable for our limited faculties.

Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, was a zealous opponent



of the opinions of Appollinaris, who had taught that the person of Christ was composed of an union of the Divinity with a human body, which was endued with a sensitive, not a rational soul: he particularly condemned the phrase which had been applied, by the followers of that heresy, to the Virgin Mary, whom they styled the *Mother of God*. The Byzantine prelate was led to take an active part in these disputes, by the opposition which had been raised by Anastasius his friend, and a presbyter of his church, to the Appollinarian phraseology. The sentiments of Nestorius and Anastasius were, however, so contrary to the blind and superstitious veneration, which the devotees of this century were disposed to pay to the Virgin, that they excited a fervent opposition among the monks of Constantinople; though the monks of Egypt were convinced by the discourses of Nestorius, and agreed with him, that the person of Christ consisted of two distinct natures, the divine and the human, and that Mary was the mother of the latter only. The imperious Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, highly incensed at the free assertion of these opinions, engaged Celestine, the bishop of Rome, in his interest; and in 430, assembled a council at Alexandria, in which the opinions of Nestorius were condemned, and no less than twelve anathemas issued against him. Nestorius, in his turn, excommunicated Cyril; and charged him with abetting the Appollinarian heresy, and with confounding the two natures of Christ.

This dispute, which greatly agitated the Christian society, occasioning the convening of the third general council at Ephesus, in 431, in which Cyril had the indecency to preside, though a party concerned; and Nestorius, in the absence of several bishops who had a right to seats in the council, was condemned *unheard*, confined in the monastery, and afterwards banished to Oasis, a solitary place in the deserts of Egypt, where, old and infirm, he soon terminated a life of suffering and persecution. The prelates, in whose absence Cyril had proceeded to the condemnation of Nestorius, with their leader, John bishop of Antioch, being arrived at Ephesus, immediately convoked a synod, in which they excommunicated the imperious bishop of Alexandria and the bishop of Ephesus, and anathematized all who refused to reject the anathemas of Cyril. The dispute between John and Cyril, continued during three years, with equal rancor and fury; but was at length terminated by the interference of the emperor, who persuaded John to conform to the decrees of the Ephesian council.

The opinions of Nestorius were not extinguished with his life. They were zealously maintained by Barsumas, bishop of Nisibis, by whom they were chiefly propagated throughout the

east, where Nestorianism still continues to be the prevailing doctrine among the professors of Christianity. Among other causes which contributed to this effect, was the reception of these opinions in the celebrated school of Edessa, where the professors not only translated, from the Greek into the Syriac, the writings of the Nestorian authors, but instructed carefully their youth in all their tenets. The Nestorians in Persia, by their influence, procured the expulsion of the Greek Christians, and obtained possession of the see of Selucia, which indeed is still retained by the patriarch of that sect.

In conjunction with their opinions respecting the Virgin Mary, the Nestorians contended, that "the union of Christ's divinity with his humanity is not an union of nature or of person, but only of will and affection; and that Christ was to be distinguished from God, who resided in him as in a temple.

By those who possess a knowledge of human nature, the real causes of deep and continued dissension will rarely be sought, and much seldomer be found, in the avowed object of dispute. In defiance of the contentious spirit of the times, Nestorius might perhaps, in consideration of the zeal he had manifested against other heretics, have been indulged in his opinions, had not the differences, between him and Cyril, been inflamed by the reciprocal jealousies entertained by the bishops of the principal sees, and by the implacable temper of the Alexandrian bishop: mutual revilings, mutual accusations of riot and sedition, and mutual charges of bribery, in order to obtain a favorable decision, were exhibited by the different combatants in this spiritual contention. Our compassion for the fate of Nestorius is considerably abated by a knowledge of these circumstances, and still more by his arrogant and persecuting temper: his desire of engaging the emperor to unite with him in the extirpation of heresy, by the promise of both temporal and spiritual rewards; his persecution of the Arians, Novatians, and other sects; and his being forward on every occasion to promote the enacting of laws against heresy. His followers suffered from the prosecution of those councils which he had dictated. Theodosius enacted, that the Nestorian ecclesiastics should be expelled from their churches, and, if laics, that they should be excommunicated; and it was enjoined ever Catholic to inform against them.

Eutyches, an abbot of a convent of monks at Constantinople, was extremely active in opposing the doctrines of Nestorius, and in procuring his condemnation. Zeal, however, against his antagonist transported him into expressions which were thought to be an heresy of an opposite nature. Eutyches asserted, that there was but *one nature* in Christ, which was the *divine*; and



though Cyril had thus expressed himself, and appealed, for his justification in it, to the authority of Athanasius, *that* happened to be heresy in a monk, which was allowable in a bishop; and Eutyches was accused of denying the existence of the human nature of Christ. In a council held at Constantinople, 448, he was excommunicated and deposed, but acquitted in another held at Ephesus, in the following year, which was conducted by Dioscorus, the successor of Cyril, and in which the animosities of the contending parties were carried to such a length, that one of the accusers of Eutyches was publicly scourged and banished to a city of Lydia, where he soon after died in consequence of the bruises he had received.

The accusers of Eutyches were not, however, disposed to submit to the decision of this tumultuous assembly; and, in concert with Leo, bishop of Rome, obtained an order for the fourth general council, which assembled at Chalcedon, in 451. In this assembly, the opinions of Eutyches were finally condemned, and the Catholic doctrine asserted, of two distinct natures in one person united in Christ, without any change, mixture or confusion. The doctrines of Eutyches were, however, almost generally received in the patriarchates of Antioch and Alexandria, though not so universally but that continued causes of uneasiness have occurred between the partisans of the different opinions, respecting the nature of Christ. The unhappy contest, which had arisen in consequence of the Eutychian and Nestorian disputes, induced the emperor Zeno to publish, in 482, a decree of union called the *Henoticon*, which was intended to reconcile the contending parties. But this decree, instead of producing the end for which it was designed, though it was subscribed by the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch, and by the more moderate and judicious of all parties, and approved by Accacius, bishop of Constantinople, yet gave great offence to the zealous and contentious, by not particularly specifying, amongst the councils to whose decrees it referred, that of Chalcedon, the mention of which was suppressed by the emperor, in consequence of his understanding that the present opposition arose, not from a dislike to the acts of the council, so much as to the council itself. A new division took place concerning the emperor's *Henoticon*: and the wounded dignity of the council of Chalcedon was vindicated with a rancor and fury, which it was the express intention of the edict to suppress.

The Monophysites, who are generally esteemed a sect of the Eutychian, equally condemned the decisions of the council of Chalcedon, and the opinions of Eutyches, that the *human nature* of Christ was absorbed by the *divine*; and asserted, that the divinity and humanity of Christ were so united as to constitute

only one nature without any change or confusion. The leaders of this were Mongus, bishop of Alexandria, and Peter, bishop of Antioch, who obtained the name of Fullo, from having carried on the business of a fuller in his monastic state. This man, who had usurped the see of Antioch, who was troublesome and contentious, and a warm opposer of the council of Chalcedon, was himself accused of endeavoring to introduce a new sect, whose distinguished tenet was, *that the Godhead had suffered in and with Christ*. His followers were, from this peculiar opinion, styled Theopaschites.

The other party, which was supported by Mongus, being deprived of their leader by his submission, were, on this account, distinguished by the appellation of the Acephali, or headless. This sect afterwards branched out into three others, which were denominated Anthropomorphites, Barsanaphites, and Eesaianites, who differed from each other only on account of some unintelligible subtleties, which are now deservedly consigned to oblivion.

It is not amidst the gloomy shades of the fifth century, that we must expect to discern the glorious light of science. Knowledge of every kind became obscured by monastic folly, and the incursions of the barbarians, who regarded no learning as necessary, which did not increase their abilities for conquest or defence. The sun of science was not however entirely set, but shone with a faint and declining lustre. Philosophy was still professed and pretended to be taught in the great schools of the empire; but it was no longer that solid rational knowledge which strengthens and improves the mind, but a composition of absurdity, of subtle and complex sophistry, and of nice and fanciful distinctions.

The three most eminent writers who illumined the fourth century, Chrysostom, Jerom, and Augustin, continued their labors in this, and were the principal opposers of the different heresies which from time to time arose; they are not however exempted from the charge of having substituted logical subtilty in the room of plain sense, and issued the decrees of men for the commandments of God.

Amongst the earliest writers of this century, we find Cyril, who, in the year 411, by the assistance of a military force, obtained the bishopric of Alexandria. A commencement so tumultuous did not indicate a season of great tranquility to the church over which he presided; and these presages were confirmed by the virulence with which he deprived the Novatians of their church, and their bishop of his property. This tyrannical spirit soon exerted itself in the assumption of new authority. The Christians of Alexandria, perfidiously drawn from



their own houses in the night by an account that the principal church was on fire, were insulted by the Jews, and several of them were slain. In order to avenge this atrocious offence, Cyril took upon himself the office of the civil magistrate, plundered the Jews in return, both innocent and guilty, and exterminated them from the city.

Orestes, the governor, incensed at this interference, resolved to depress the assuming prelate, who, however, assisted by a body of five hundred monks, repelled his attacks, assaulted him in his progress through the streets, affected to worship, as a martyr, a sedulous monk, who, upon this occasion had been put to death by the governor, and was supposed to have been privy to the murder of the learned and accomplished Hypatia. This celebrated female, the daughter of Theon the mathematician, was initiated in her father's studies; her judicious comments elucidated the works of the most famous geometricians; and crowds of pupils resorted to her schools in Athens and Alexandria, to be instructed in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. This female philosopher was accused or suspected of favoring the cause of Orestes, and preventing a reconciliation between him and Cyril. She became, consequently, obnoxious to the fury of the savage band of Nitrian monks, and was rudely torn from her chariot, and murdered with every circumstance of aggravated cruelty. The black accusation, that Cyril was not unconcerned in this infamous transaction, has by some writers been controverted; but as no ecclesiastical censure was passed upon it by the bishop, who was always sufficiently ready to fulminate the ecclesiastical thunder; and as the murderers of Hypatia were headed by one Peter, a reader in the Alexandrian church, there is too much reason for the belief, that, if Cyril was not the immediate instigator of this dreadful action, the death of an opponent, however effected, was not disagreeable to him.

The literary abilities of Cyril were far from excellent. Strongly attached to mysticism and allegory, he was a subtle and crafty disputant, but neither elegant, judicious, nor profound. His works of which his books against Julian are the principal) are comprised in six folio volumes. His zeal against heterodoxy has atoned, with many, not only for his imperfections as a writer, but for his faults as a man; and, notwithstanding his rancor, his ambition, and his accomplishing the ruin of Nestorius, by such lavish bribery as impoverished the Alexandrian church, his zeal and superstition have effected his exaltation into the calendar of the saints.

Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, and celebrated for his

opposition to Origenism and to Chrysostom, has been accused of every mean and perfidious artifice which disgraces and vilifies human nature. He appears, indeed, to have been one of the numberless scourges which continually afflicted the Alexandrian church. The resentment of this prelate against some Nitrian monks, by whom he had been, in several instances, offended, induced him to command their immediate surrender of all the writings of Origen, to which they were strongly attached. The common fate of absurd requisitions is contempt and disobedience; and the monks refused to comply. In consequence of this, the arrogant prelate obtained, in the council of Alexandria, the condemnation of all the followers of Origen; and an armed force was despatched to disperse the monks of Nitria, who fled from their deserts, and despatched three of their body to plead their cause before the emperor at Constantinople, where they were favorably received by Chrysostom, who, however disposed to the doctrines of Origen, might also not be averse to protect those who were persecuted by his ancient and implacable enemy. The proceedings of Theophilus against these monks, who were distinguished by the appellation of the *three tall brothers*, were declared calumnious, by commissioners appointed by the emperor to investigate the dispute. The resentment of the bishop against the Byzantine patriarch knew no bounds; it was uniformly exerted throughout the life of the unfortunate prelate, and even manifested after his death, when his name, through the influence of Theophilus, was erased from the sacred diptychs, to which place it was not restored till after the decease of the Alexandrian prelate, and the lapse of several years. Few of the writings of Theophilus are now extant. Whilst he governed the see of Alexandria, he ordained Synesius, a Platonic philosopher, and a disciple and panegyrist of the accomplished Hypatia, to the bishopric of Ptolemais. The sage, however, appears to have been so far from soliciting this honor, that he pleaded against its acceptance, his being married to an amiable wife, whom he would neither repudiate nor visit clandestinely, and his Platonic opinions. These objections were, however, overruled by Theophilus; and the reluctant Synesius proved, both by his practice and his writings, a considerable ornament to the church.

Isidore, a priest of Pelusium, or Damietta, an Egyptian city, was, both by his manners and his writings, a severe censor of the corrupt manners of the ecclesiastics of the fifth century; and openly condemned the conduct of Cyril and Theophilus. His works consist of a considerable number of epistles, which



abound in piety and erudition, and are composed upon select passages of Scripture, the doctrines of the church, and the monastic state.

One of the most learned prelates of this century was Theodorus bishop of Mopsuestia, who has added to the character of a valuable writer, that of an excellent man. After his decease, his memory and his works were condemned, on the charge of having imbibed the Pelagian and Nestorian opinions. His commentaries on scripture, which were peculiarly judicious, are said to be still in the hands of the Nestorians, by whom they are greatly esteemed: the remainder of his works are either lost, or supposed to be extant only in the Syriac language, and in the hands of the Nestorians.

The number of learned men who employed their abilities in the interpretation of the sacred scriptures, was not so considerable as in the preceding centuries, though several still undertook the task of explaining particular parts and books of the Old and New Testament. Arnobius composed a very indifferent exposition of the Psalms; Pelagius wrote a commentary on St. Paul; Cyril, and Victor of Antioch, also composed some commentaries upon scripture; and Gelasius, bishop of Rome earnestly endeavored to distinguish the canonical from the apocryphal books.

Of the greater part of the writers of the fifth century, little more can be necessary than to mention their names and works. Several sermons were published by Antiochus, bishop of Ptolemais, Asterius of Amasia, Peter of Ravenna, Gaudentius of Brescia, and Severian of Gabala, whose eloquence is said to have excited the jealousy of Chrysostom. Leo the great, bishop of Rome, employed his abilities in efforts for the extension of his see, and in persecuting the Manichean, Pelagian, Nestorian, and Eutychian heretics, several of his letters and sermons still remain. Amongst the controversial writers we discover the names of Gregentius, Evagrius, and Basil, who defended Christianity against the Jews. The Pagans were attacked by Philostorgius, Philip Sedetes, Eudius, Evagrius, and Orosius, a Spanish priest, who, at the request of Augustin, selected a catalogue of the most remarkable events, from the time of Jesus Christ, to prove that the calamities which afflicted the Roman empire, could not, as the Pagans supposed, result from their neglect of the worship of the gods.

The principal opposers of heresy, besides those already enumerated, were, Syagrius, Gennadius, and Voconius. Lessons of morality were inculcated by Eucherius bishop of Lyons, Prosper, Diadoculos, and Evagrius, few of whose fragments

have reached posterity; and by Nilus, the disciple of Chrysostom, who, after having been governor of Constantinople, renounced the world, and retired to the wilderness of Sinai. Several homilies of Basil bishop of Seleucia, and of Maximus bishop of Turin, still remain. Cassian composed several books of instruction for the monastic state, and some other performances; and Palladius composed lives of the monks, which he has styled *Historia Lausiacæ*. Prosper bishop of Nola, and Sidonius bishop of Clermont, wrote several poems; and the learned, the charitable, but self-austere Salvian published four books on alms, addressed to the Catholic church, and a treatise upon providence. A multitude of other authors of inferior celebrity may be seen in the catalogue of Genadius, a priest of Marseilles, who has collected a very considerable number of the names of those ecclesiastical authors who either were his predecessors or contemporaries. Many spurious productions made their appearance during the fifth century, which were pretended to be the productions of the ancient fathers of the church, and were exhibited to combat the doctrines which were to be overturned, or to support such as were to be established. Amongst these, were the works which bear the name of Dionysius the Areopagite; they were first quoted in the conference between the Severians and the Catholics, which was held at Constantinople in the year 433.

The three great contempory ecclesiastical historians, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, flourished in this century; to whom may be added, Philostorgius, who composed a history of the church. The first of these authors received his education at Constantinople, and, after some time spent in study, professed the law, and pleaded at the bar, whence he obtained the appellation of Scholasticus, a name generally given to advocates. His history is written with accuracy and judgment, though deficient in elegance, and with much plainness and simplicity of style. As he entertained favorable opinions of the Novatians, he has been accused of having adopted their opinions, but without reason. It is probable that as he was prudent and moderate, and a friend to civil and religious liberty, these liberal sentiments in an uncharitable age, were the only grounds for the accusation of heterodoxy.

Hermias Sozomenus, who likewise flourished in the reign of the younger Theodosius, was also educated for the law; his extreme credulity, respecting miracles, excites the disgust of his readers. though his style is much superior to that of Socrates. From the great similarity between their respective performances, there is some reason to believe, that the one must have



copied the other: if so, as the history of Socrates was first composed, Sozomen must have been the transcriber.

The history of Theodoret appears to have been written posterior to these, and, in several instances, it has supplied their deficiencies. The talents and learning of this bishop appear to have been considerable, but his impartiality was not sufficient for an historian. The writings of Theodoret were not confined to ecclesiastical history; he wrote several discourses and commentaries upon scripture, in which he abridged Chrysostom. He was dedicated, by his parents, to the service of the church, even before his birth, and with the same view passed his youth in a monastery. In opposition to his own wishes, he was afterwards ordained bishop of Cyre, and in this situation he boasted (and if true, in such an age, he might be permitted to boast) that neither he nor any of his clergy had ever been at law, or had ever, by their conduct, deserved a prosecution; and that he himself had not only dispensed the ecclesiastical revenues, in improving the city, but had dispensed his patrimony to the necessities of the poor. His opinions, relative to Cyril and the Nestorian controversy, were so obnoxious to the prevailing party, that in that dispute, the emperor threatened to depose him from his see. This menace was not, however, executed; and during the time when he had the utmost reason to expect it, the fears of the amiable bishop must have been considerably soothed, by the apprehensions of others for his safety, and the attachment which was manifested towards him, by the people of his diocese. In the fifth general council, in the year 453, his writings concerning Nestorianism were vehemently condemned.

The close of this century, or the beginning of the next, was remarkable, by the publication of the Talmud. This celebrated piece of Jewish literature, containing, as the Rabbins pretend, the oral laws which God delivered to Moses, consists of two parts, each of which is divided into several books. The first part, *Mishna*, contains the text; the second is a kind of commentary upon that text, which is styled *Gemara*. This oral law or tradition of the Jews was collected after the destruction of the temple, in the year 150, by rabbi Judah, and is preferred by that people even to the scriptures. They suppose it was orally delivered by Moses to Israel, and unlawful to be written. When Jerusalem, however, was destroyed, they were constrained to write, in order to preserve it; but wrote it in such a way, that it could be understood by none but themselves. The *Mishna* and *Gemara* complete the two Talmuds; the first, that of Jerusalem, in 230; the second,

that of Babylon, five hundred years after Christ. The Talmuds, however intended, confirm in reality the history of Jesus Christ. The existence and actions of a person of that name are recorded in that of Babylon; and many texts, relative to the Messiah, are confirmed and explained by these books.



## CHAPTER VII.

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### THE SIXTH CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—OF GOVERNMENT, DOCTRINE, RITES, AND CEREMONIES, IN THE SIXTH CENTURY.—OF THE SECTS WHICH APPEARED IN THE SIXTH CENTURY.—OF LEARNING AND LEARNEDMEN IN THE SIXTH CENTURY.

The decisions of the council of Chalcedon, in the preceding century had, as was before stated, increased instead of extinguished the fierce flames of ecclesiastical discord. Their effects, during the greater part of the sixth century, were not less destructive to the peace of the Christian world. Anastasius, the successor of Zeno, was a firm and strenuous supporter of the Henoticon, published by his predecessor; and the crime of being an Eutychian was generally laid to his charge. The successive patriarchs of Constantinople, who, from professing themselves the steady opponents, had become the zealous advocates of the Chalcedonian decrees, were, by the intrigues of an Egyptian monk, and the authority of the emperor, punished for their temerity by the deprivation of their sees. The imperial interference was, however, less favorable to the tranquillity of the empire than to the ambition of the insidious monk Severus, who obtained the episcopal throne of Antioch, while that of Constantinople was filled by Timothy, another of the same fraternity. The innovations which the Constantinopolitan prelate attempted to introduce into public worship were extremely obnoxious to his turbulent subjects. They rose, furiously assaulted the Eutychian party, which was favored by their bishop, and a tumult ensued between the orthodox and heretical factions, in which several lives were sacrificed. The inferior clergy and people of Antioch were involved in similar disturbances. Many anathemas against the Chalcedonian decrees were fulminated by the patriarch of Antioch; but his decisions were rejected and despised by several of the

bishops within his own jurisdiction, who warmly refused to acknowledge the heterodox Severus as their lawful superior. These disturbances were augmented by the influence of Vitellianus, one of the emperor's generals, who avowedly patronized the cause of orthodoxy, and of Macedonius the deposed prelate of Constantinople, and approached the imperial city, at the head of an army, which, though hastily levied, was formidable from its numbers, and its chief. Vitellianus loudly threatened the deposition of the heretical emperor, if he dared to reject his propositions, which consisted in his consenting to the restoration of the banished bishops, and the convention of a fifth œcumenical council, again to consider the articles of faith. Anastasius at first refused to accede to the proposed terms; but, little prepared to oppose so formidable a body, after having seen himself deprived of the government of Mæsia and Thrace by his antagonist, he was compelled to promise a full compliance with his demands. But the faith of princes and politicians is almost proverbially insecure. The emperor had, by his artful assurances, induced his honest but less politic rival to disband and dismiss his turbulent army, and to retire to his government in Thrace; but no sooner had he obtained the accomplishment of these preliminary conditions, than, in defiance of all the rules of equity and honor, of candor and humanity, he protected the Monophysite party, and treated his catholic subjects with additional rancor and violence.

The death of Anastasius proved the dawn of a brighter day to the catholic party. Justin, his successor, whose valour and address had exalted him from the humble station of a shepherd's boy to the possession of a throne, was little qualified to enter into the subtleties of theological and metaphysical disquisitions, since, in fact, he could neither write nor read, and his character, previous to his being invested with the purple, naturally leads us to believe that his acuteness and penetration had been directed rather to the improvement of the soldier than to the divine. The cause of the council of Chalcedon was, however, immediately and vigorously espoused by the orthodox emperor, who insisted on the strict performance of all its decrees. Severus was deposed and exiled, the catholic bishops obtained the restoration of their sees, and the sect of the Eutychians was persecuted and depressed. The zeal of the emperor in the cause of orthodoxy was still further manifested; the Arians appeared extremely obnoxious to him; and, by a public edict, he commanded them to be deprived of their churches throughout the whole extent of his dominions.

The decrees of synods and councils, and the deprivation



of dignities, are insufficient at once to eradicate prejudices deeply rooted in the mind, and nourished to maturity by careful culture, and the invigorating sunshine of royal favor. The zeal of Justin, and the cares of Justinian, his associate and successor, were steadily but ineffectually employed in the extirpation of heresy. On the decease of Justin, his nephew was gratefully regarded by the catholic party as the firm supporter of their cause. The retrospect of his religious sentiments afforded them the most glowing hopes of his future favor, and the certain establishment of what they regarded as religious truth. The first actions of his reign tended to realise these hopes. Speculations concerning the divine nature; and theological discussions, were indeed the principal employment of Justinian; and the result was an absurd and cruel attempt to compel all his subjects to a perfect conformity of opinion with himself in all matters of religion, for which purpose, severe edicts were issued against his heretical and infidel subjects. But religious factions invaded his palace, his bed, and his throne. His empress, Theodora, was an equally zealous and a more inflexible friend to the Eutychian party, than her husband to the Chalcedonians: and the subjects of the eastern empire, ranged under the banners of those great theological combatants, were alternately reviled and depressed. Nor was theirs a war merely of words; riots and tumults were continually excited by the contending parties; and the same factious spirit, which had manifested its influence in the commencement of the century, in the seditions of the Circus, concerning the blue and green factions, in which innumerable lives were sacrificed, was now employed in directing anathemas against all who differed from whatever was considered to be the true faith, or in pursuing the inextricable lybarinth of theological disquisition.

The mysticism and obscurity of Origen were so congenial to the taste and spirit of the time, and particularly to the eastern monks, that all the decrees of councils, and all the anathemas of the clergy, were ineffectual in obstructing its progress. The private disgust of an individual procured from the emperor a public disapprobation of these opinions. Pelagius, the Romish nuncio, envious of the distinction shown by the emperor to Theodore, the bishop of Cæsarea, an Eutychian, and a strenuous defender of Origenism, incited by his persuasions and artifices the zealous Justinian to condemn the doctrines of Origen, and to command them to be entirely suppressed. This decision was approved by the patriarch of Constantinople and the other bishops; and Theodoret received, in this indirect but certain mode, a severe blow, which was soon after followed by a deter-

mination of the emperor to condemn the sect of the Acephali, which was favored by the bishop of Cæsarea. This design was however counteracted by the artifices of the empress, and by Theodore himself, who had been consulted on the most effectual methods which could be taken for their extirpation. The avowed opponent of the decrees of Chalcedon, in order to favor his own party, and to distress his adversaries, had the address to persuade the emperor that rescinding those passages in the edicts of the fourth general council, which had declared the orthodoxy of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyre, and Ibas of Edessa, and condemning their writings, which were peculiarly obnoxious to the Eutychians, would completely remove the objections of the Acephali, and unite them in entire communion with the Catholic church. The censure of three persons of doubtful reputation was so small a consideration for the important acquisition of a number of orthodox believers, that Justinian readily consented to publish an edict in condemnation of these writings, which was celebrated by the name of the *Three Chapters*. This was followed by the convention of a council at Constantinople, in which the sentence of the Three Chapters was confirmed. In the acts of this council, the utmost pains were employed by the members to preserve inviolate the dignity of the council of Chalcedon, by the denunciation of an anathema against all who contemned, or refused to acknowledge, its authority. But the propagation of edicts, which so evidently censured the decrees of the Chalcedonian council, was little correspondent to his apparent zeal; and the opprobrium thrown upon that assembly, and upon the memory of wise and respectable men who had died in communion with the church, was warmly opposed by the western bishops, and by Vigilius, the pontiff of Rome. The contentious prelate soon afterwards visited Constantinople, where, either by the persuasive influence of royal entreaties, or the force of a temporary conviction, he was prevailed upon to acquiesce in the edict, and joined in the condemnation of the Three Chapters. His assent to these measures was however soon withdrawn. The refractory bishops of Africa immediately separated from his communion, and affected to consider him as an apostate from the faith. Wearied with this opposition, Vigilius retracted his censure of these celebrated works, and once more professed his firm adherence to the decisions of Chalcedon.

Destitute of its real importance, as this controversy certainly was, it produced an uninterrupted succession of commotions and cabals. Justinian enforced his former decree by the promulgation of a new edict; and highly resented the wavering and con-



tumacious conduct of Vigilius, who retired into the church of St. Peter, to screen himself from the effects of the emperor's resentment. Sacred as were the rights of sanctuary, such was the indignation of Justinian, that the pontiff would have been immediately torn from his asylum, had not the populace tumultuously interfered, and by their means the bishop escaped. Mutual recrimination and mutual resentment continued, during a considerable period, to exasperate the minds of the emperor and the refractory bishop. Tired with these repeated oppositions in a concern which he had so much at heart, Justinian convoked, in the year 553, a general council at Constantinople; at which Vigilius, though earnestly importuned by a deputation from the assembly, of three patriarchs, and a number of the most respectable bishops, refused to attend. During the deliberations of this assembly, Vigilius, in his letters to the emperor, severely censured the condemnation of Theodore, Theodoret, and Ibas; and arrogantly attempted by his apostolical authority to prevent any decision contrary to his own. This had, however, no effect upon the council, in which the versatility of the Roman bishop was exposed; the decrees of the four preceding general councils were fully acknowledged, and to those who had been already condemned in these conventions, were not only added the names and writings of Theodore, Theodoret, and Ibas, but anathemas were pronounced against all who should approve their errors. These decisions were warmly opposed by Vigilius, who by his obstinate resistance provoked the emperor to send him into banishment. His retreat from the busy world, which either afforded his passions an opportunity to subside, or else the operation of his natural versitility, produced another dereliction of the opinions to which he had so obstinately adhered; and again he publicly condemned the Three Chapters. His death soon succeeded his recall.

The religious speculations of the emperor were not confined to this troublesome controversy. He took an active part in that which was agitated concerning the question, whether it could with propriety be said that one of the Trinity had suffered. The affirmative was asserted by the monks of Scythia, and favored by Justinian, but was opposed by the monks of Constantinople. The bishop of Rome, at the request of the emperor, published a decree in favor of the Scythian monks, and asserted the propriety of saying that one of the Trinity had suffered; since Jesus Christ, one of the persons in the glorious Trinity, had suffered in the flesh. The opinions of the emperor were not however uniformly consonant to the faith of councils, and the decrees of the fathers; and his catholicism in the even-

ing of his life was obscured by a dark cloud. The tendency to religious disputation, so prevalent in all the subjects of the empire, was considerably increased by the approbation and example of the emperor; and numberless were the unprofitable and unimportant controversies which were continually discussed. Amongst these, a dispute had arisen, whether the body of Christ, during his residence upon earth, was corruptible or incorruptible. The zealous emperor, who had so strenuously labored for the orthodoxy of his subjects, and the extirpation of the Pagans, Arians, with every other species of heretics; whether from the natural imbecility of age, the versatility of the human mind, the persuasions of the empress,\* or the collected force of all these motives, professed himself a disciple of the incorruptibles, in the year 545. Thus, by publishing an edict declaratory of his belief, he at length enrolled his name amongst the Heresiarchs. These disputes, which were sustained by the controversial spirit of the emperor, continued to flame out with greater or less violence during his reign; but, after his decease, gradually declined, and were soon extinguished.

The Eutychian party acquired a steady and zealous protector in Justin II. the nephew and successor of Justinian. From the discouragements and persecutions they had met with from former emperors, their numbers had, however, considerably declined; and their sect appeared to be rapidly expiring.

The claims to supremacy, which had for preceding centuries been asserted by the bishops of Rome, were at first faintly urged, and promoted by artful and almost imperceptible means. They now however insisted upon superiority, as a divine right attached to their see, which had been founded by St. Peter; and this doctrine, which had appeared to influence the conduct of some of the Romish bishops of the preceding century, was no longer concealed, or cautiously promulgated, by those who possessed the see during the present period. But, however extensive their authority, the bishops of the ancient capital still remained, both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs, subject first to the jurisdiction of the Gothic kings, and, upon the retaking of Rome, to the Greek emperors; who, in imitation of their bar-

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\* The persuasions of a beautiful woman may perhaps have some weight, even with the most intrepid theologian; nor was Justinian insensible of female beauty. But the attractions of Theodora were not confined to her personal charms. When, in a popular tumult against the life of the emperor, he would have abandoned the city, and endeavoured to escape; with an intrepidity unusual to her sex, she persuaded the emperor rather to resign his life than his empire; and exclaimed, "that a kingdom was a glorious sepulchre."



barian predecessors, claimed additional rights. Such however was the extensive influence of the papal intrigues, that there were few amongst the potentates of the western empire, who were not, before the close of the succeeding century, subjected to the authority of the bishops of Rome.

A station so elevated, which lay open to the ambition of such numbers, who from the disadvantages of birth, fortune, and even talents could never have obtained any of the honorable offices of civil life, was eagerly contested for, and frequently obtained, by fraud, chicanery, and the practice of whatever was the most opposite to the conduct of a genuine believer in the gospel of Christ. During the progress of the sixth century, the peace of the Romish church was thrice invaded by the contests of rival pontiffs. Symmachus, a deacon of Rome, and Laurentius, who, upon the death of the bishop Anastasius, had, by different parties, been elevated to the vacant sees, continued for several years to assert their discordant pretensions. After repeated struggles, and the claim of a prior right, the party of Symmachus at length prevailed. They were materially assisted by the pen and abilities of Ennodius, bishop of Pavia, who descended to employ the most abject flattery in the behalf of Symmachus, whom he addressed not with the common adulatory terms appropriated to royalty, but in those which approached to divinity; asserted that he was *judge in the place of God, and vicegerent of the Most High*. The church was again divided by the reciprocal claims of Boniface and Dioscorus: the premature death of the latter terminated, however, this clerical war. But the century did not close without another similar disturbance in this unhappy church. The intrigues of Vigilius procured a secret order from the empress Theodora to Belisarius, who was then at Rome, for the deposition of the reigning bishop Silverus, and the investiture of Vigilius in all the rights of the deposed prelate. The unhappy Silverus was, in consequence of this command, deprived of his dignities, and banished; but, upon the interference of Justinian, he returned to Italy, with the delusive expectation of regaining his rights. The good fortune, however, or the superior artifices of Vigilius once more prevailed; his antagonist was resigned to his power; and was confined by him in the islands of Pontus and Pandataria, where in penury and affliction he terminated his wretched existence. Whether the testimonials which were produced to clear Pelagius, the successor of Vigilius, from the crime of having been accessory to the death of this insolent, versatile, and ambitious prelate, were sufficient to prove his innocence to mankind, cannot easily be now ascertained. His judges however were satisfied; and posterity will perhaps

not disapprove the appearance of that retributive justice, which seems to have punished Vigilius by the operation of the very same passions which had produced the misery and death of his predecessor.

The advantages attendant upon the acquisition of such enormous power were alloyed by jealousies and apprehensions. The bishops of the Byzantine see, scarcely less arrogant and ambitious than their brethren of Rome, refused to acknowledge their pre-eminence, and laid claim to similar authority. The arrogant pretensions of these rival sees involved them in continual dissensions; which were prodigiously increased by the conduct of John, the Faster, a prelate distinguished for his austerity; who, in a council held at Constantinople in the year 588, assumed the title of *œcumenical* or *universal bishop*; which had been conferred by Leo and Justinian upon the patriarch of Constantinople, though unaccompanied by any accessions of power. This appellation, which implied a pre-eminence difficult to be endured, was opposed by Pelagius the Second, who was then bishop of Rome; and earnestly contested by his successor Gregory the Great, who asserted in lofty terms the rights of the Romish see to an entire supremacy over the whole Christian world.

The barbarian conquerors of the western parts of the empire had, as was before observed, in general adopted the heretical opinions of Arius; and they continued, with few exceptions, to be for some time hostile to the Catholic faith. Thrasimund, king of the Vandals, more accomplished, but less tolerant, than many of his contemporary monarchs, offered the most liberal incentives to apostacy; and deprived the African Catholics of their churches, which he commanded to be shut up; and two hundred and twenty bishops to be banished to Sardinia, where they languished in exile during fifteen years. Their restoration to peace and freedom, under his successor Hilderic, proved only a prelude to that state of authority and consequence, which they obtained from the conquest of Africa by the victorious Belisarius, the great and successful general, but latterly the unfortunate victim of Justinian. The resumption of their pristine rights was not accompanied with the mild virtues of the primitive Christians. Still smarting from the severities they had recently experienced, they resolved to inflict equal punishments upon their persecutors; and the Arians were in their turn exposed to the sufferings they had inflicted upon the Catholics.

The decline of Arianism, in every part of the western empire, was accelerated with hasty steps. Clovis labored to establish Christianity wherever he carried his victorious arms; and the



Gauls, before the close of the sixth century, submitted to the government and to the religion of the Franks. By the natural vicissitudes of humor to which all monarchical government must be exposed, the inhabitants of Italy were placed alternately under the dominion of an orthodox or an heretical monarch. Narses, the eunuch, the general of Justinian, and the rival of Belisarius, reduced the country under subjection to the empire; from which, the whole, except the cities of Rome and Ravenna, was again dismembered, and governed by a succession of petty kings. The professors of the gospel, in Italy, groaned for several years under the dominion of their Pagan conquerors, by whom they were cruelly oppressed; but at length Christianity, according to the faith of Arius, was received and professed by Autharis, the third monarch of the Lombards. The faith of this ferocious people becoming gradually more refined and improved, Theodalinda, the relic of Autharis, was induced to profess the Nicene doctrines; and the Lombards gradually assumed, with their greater purity of faith, the more gentle virtues of Christians. The Visigoths of Spain continued their adherence to Arianism till the year 586; when, convinced by the powerful arguments, or influenced by the authority and example, of their monarch Recared, they abjured these errors, and entered within the pale of the Catholic church. Recared was honored, on his conversion to the orthodox faith, with the title of the *Most Catholic King*. This monarch pleaded to his Arian clergy the testimony of earth and heaven, in support of the orthodox cause. The earth had so far submitted to profess the Catholic creed, that few of the Christian nations, except the Visigoths, continued to reject its truths; and the testimony of heaven was apparent from the miracles continually performed by the clergy of the Catholic church. These arguments were supported by the example of the Suevi, their neighbors, who were settled in Gallicia, and who had previously rejected the Arian, and adopted the Catholic creed.

Whatever regards a country, which early prejudices and deeply rooted attachments have accustomed us strongly to revere, is peculiarly interesting and important to the human mind. England, which during this century was vanquished by the Saxons, at first experienced from her Pagan conquerors a severe persecution. Towards the close of this century, however, Bertha, the believing wife of Ethelbert, one of the most considerable of the Anglo-Saxon princes, excited in her husband a favorable opinion of her own religious faith, which was greatly increased by the arrival of Augustin, the monk, who traveled on a mission into Britain, in the year 596. This monk, aided by the labors of his forty companions, whom Gregory the Great had associa-

ted with him in this mission, had the happiness to complete, in Ethelbert, the conversion which Bertha had begun. He preached, he persuaded, he threatened; and his labors were so successful, that Christianity reared her triumphant fabric upon the ruins of Paganism. Heathen temples were converted into Christian churches, Christ-Church was formed into a cathedral; and this monk, whom Gregory had invested with full spiritual power over all the British and Saxon clergy, assumed the title of archbishop of Canterbury. Upon his arrival in Britain, Augustin found the Christians of Britain attached to the tradition of the eastern churches respecting the time of celebrating Easter, and differing also from the practices of the church of Rome, in the performance of some baptismal rites. This variation was warmly and haughtily condemned by the arrogant monk: but he found not in the British clergy a mean and dastardly submission to his imperious decrees. They refused even to acknowledge him as their archbishop, and would not be prevailed upon to exchange their ancient ceremonies. During six hundred years the Britanic church never acknowledged any subjection to the power of the Romish prelates; and, for several ages after the mission of Augustin, were so far from conforming to the practices of that church, respecting the paschal controversy, that they observed Easter on a different day.

The form of church government, which had been established during the two preceding centuries, received in this, little or no alteration. By the laws of Justinian, the inferior ranks of the people were totally excluded from any share in the appointment of their ministers, the choice of whom was restricted to the optimates, or superior orders, and to the clergy. The power, indeed, originally exercised by the people, appears never to have so universally obtained, that on certain occasions it could not be restrained or varied, according to different situations and circumstances. Whilst it continued to be exercised, it was frequently so grossly abused, and produced such disturbances in the church, as to afford a very reasonable pretext for withdrawing it. The evils of a popular election were, as was formerly stated, prevented at Rome, after Italy was subjugated by the Gothic princes, who themselves appointed the bishop. In the different kingdoms of the western empire, different modes were adopted for adjusting the appointments to clerical offices. A custom prevailed in France for the monarch to dispose of ecclesiastical appointments by sale. In Spain a new regulation for this effect was passed in the council of Barcelona, in the year 599, which ordained, that, when a bishopric was vacant, two or three candidates should be chosen, and elected by the consent of the clergy and people, who should



formally present them to the metropolitan and his assistant bishops. This assembly, having previously fasted, was to cast lots for the candidates, leaving the determination to Christ the Lord. These regulations were far from being favorable to the interests of literature, or even of virtue. The Gothic princes appeared indeed desirous to nominate the worthiest candidate to the pontificate; but they were indifferent judges of learning, and not very likely to esteem in others those qualities which they did not possess themselves, and of which they could scarcely conceive the necessity. The sale of benefices was still more pernicious; and the method of choosing a spiritual guide by lot, even if fairly conducted, was injudicious.

More firmly rooted each succeeding year, the noxious plants of superstition continued to throw out a number of strong and vigorous branches, which were carefully encouraged and cultivated. They were indeed an unfailing source of profit to the corrupt ministers of the church. The people were instructed that, by their liberality to the clergy or to the monastery, they conciliated the favor of heaven, and obtained the intercession of departed saints. Some of the churches were possessed of very considerable estates; but that of Rome, according to Theodorus Lector, in the year 520, chose not to keep any immoveable possessions; and, if it was presented with such, immediately sold them, and the purchase money was divided into three parts, one of which was appropriated to the use of the church, the second to the bishop, and the third, in appointed portions, to the inferior clergy. Where the revenues were thus divided, the power of the bishop must have been very considerable. Several councils indeed appointed persons to be associated with him in the distribution of ecclesiastical property; but even then, the share which was allotted for the exigencies of the church, would be distributed chiefly by his direction, and in such a manner as to extend his influence, if it was not appropriated to the indulgence of a baser passion. The property which had been gradually acquiring by the clergy, had been considerably augmented by the laws of Constantine (which encouraged bequests to the church,) and by an allowance from the public revenue. Constantine also instituted the church successor to all martyrs or persecuted persons, who died without heirs. Upon the demolition of the heathen temples, the buildings, statues, and revenues were sometimes presented to the clergy; and Honorius enacted, that the property belonging to all heretics and conventicles should be appropriated to the same use.\* The revenues of the church continued to receive fresh augmentations

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\* An admirable expedient for promoting unanimity.

from the zeal of Justinian, who confiscated to its use the estates and property of all the clergy, or monks, who forsook the church or monastery to lead a secular life.

The corrupted doctrines of religion received, if no improvement, no very considerable alterations, in the sixth century. The torments of an intermediate state were indeed loudly insisted upon to the ignorant multitude, at this time, by the superstitious Gregory, whom the Romish church has chosen to distinguish by the appellation of Great. This prelate is supposed, by some, to have laid the foundation of the modern doctrine of purgatory, which supposes a punishment to take place immediately after death, and previous to the station assigned as the eternal residence of the soul: but his opinions differed very little from those of Augustin, who preceded him near a century; and Gregory must be regarded as the promoter, not the institutor, of the doctrine. Various have been the opinions respecting the seat of purgatory. Volcanos, or the ocean, the torments of conflicting elements, or the violent convulsions of hope and fear, have, by the profound explorers of divine truth, been at different times assigned to the departed soul of man; and the ministers, who inflict punishment, have by some been believed to be angels, and by others demons. The wonderful efficacy of pictures and relics was loudly insisted upon; and the utmost reverence inculcated for the Virgin Mary, around whose head new honors were perpetually gathering. In the reign of Justinian, it became common to join the Virgin Mary, and the archangels Michael and Gabriel, in solemn oaths. The esteem for celibacy so much increased, that, though the Arian clergy of the western parts of the empire were in general married, the Latin bishops of the Catholic church extended in some places the obligation of celibacy to sub-deacons. These regulations made it necessary to renew or enforce with vigor those laws which prohibited the clergy from entertaining in their houses any female, who came not within the degrees of near consanguinity. From imposing restraints upon the marriages of the clergy, some marriages, which had hitherto been regarded as lawful, were discouraged and interdicted amongst the laity. In the reign of Justinian, in certain degrees of spiritual relationship persons were prohibited from contracting marriages with each other, particularly in that between a god-father and god-daughter, which was supposed to unite their souls in a divine manner, and to induce a paternal affection. Succeeding councils advanced upon these doctrines; and the canon law extended the relationship to the baptizer and baptized, the catechist and catechumen, and ingeniously discovered several degrees of spiritual kindred.



The primitive doctrines of the gospel were so entirely obscured by superstition, and so imperfectly understood, that great numbers began to conceive that the profession of religion was all that was necessary for acceptance with God. Provided they were enrolled amongst the sacred numbers who sought to procure heaven by the neglect of their duties on earth, or believed they performed a full expiation for the most atrocious offences by the infliction of voluntary personal punishment, or the institution of novel rites, or added pomp, in the worship of the monastery, they conceived their salvation most certainly attained. Early in this century, Sigismund, king of Burgundy, who, at the instigation of his mother, had cruelly murdered his own son, attempted to appease the vengeance of the Supreme Being, by liberal donations to the monastery of St. Maurice, in Vallais (which he had founded in honor of the celebrated Theban Legion,) by the institution of a full chorus of perpetual psalmody, and by an assiduous practice of the most austere devotions of the monks. Several new orders were instituted, and exact rules prescribed for their conduct. Cæsarius, bishop of Arles, founded, in the year 507, a monastery for women, and distinguished himself amongst the number of those who composed regulations for the monastic life. In these, the offending nun, who was insensible to the milder punishments of reprimands, or a separation from the social and religious exercises of the society, was condemned to the severe discipline of flagellation, in which, however, the punishment was mercifully confined to forty stripes, save one.

Benedict, the founder of an order which through successive ages is still distinguished by his name, was a monk of Sublaquam, in the diocese of Tyber, where he erected in the adjacent wilderness twelve monasteries, each containing twelve monks; one of which, from a variety of causes, increased so much in splendor and reputation, as to be not only exempted from episcopal power, but to hold fourteen villages under its peculiar jurisdiction. The rules prescribed by this monk, for the regulation of his disciples, were milder with respect to discipline, and more reasonable in their tendency, than those of any of any of his predecessors; and his order acquired a degree of reputation so favorable to its increase, that it nearly absorbed all the other monastic institutions of the western empire. Some of them indeed were distinguished by the different appellations of Cistertains, Grandimontenses, and several others; but twenty-three monastic orders have been traced to this source. From the newly-peopled wilderness of Sublaquam, Benedict departed to Mount Cassian, where he employed his time in the arrange-

ment and perfecting of his rules, and where he died about the year 545.

To expatiate upon the extravagances and absurdities practised by the different orders of monks, either in the gloomy cloisters of their convents, or in their dreary retreats in the desserts; or to recount the artifices practised by them in their commerce with the world, would afford a detail little edifying or agreeable. Pillar-monkery continued to seduce its votaries, not only in the east, where Simeon Stylites, junior, in imitation of his fanatical predecessor, lived sixty-eight years upon different pillars; but it extended to the west, which in general appears to have been more distinguished by the knavery than the fanaticism of his monastic disciples. Vulfilaic, however, a monk of Lombardy, ascended a pillar at Treves, where he endured the inclemencies in the winter; and with apparent reluctance obeyed the commands of the bishop, who represented to him, that the cold climate of Germany was not calculated for these devotional exertions. A number of the austere penitents, whose madness had probably occasioned their severities, and whose fanaticism in return heightened their mental imbecility, obtained a safe retreat from the world, in an hospital established in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, for the reception of those monks, who, in rashly attempting to pursue the lives of hermits, had sustained a deprivation of reason, which they had afterwards recovered.\*

Degraded by superstition and ignorance, as the cloistered retreats certainly were, they however became almost the only refuge to which learning and philosophy could retire from the tumults of war and the desolations of barbarism. The founders of many orders had extorted from their followers a solemn obligation to employ a certain portion of their time in the daily study of those treatises of celestial wisdom, which were deposited in the rich mines of ancient theology. An accumulation of absurdity would, in an ignorant age, be necessarily admitted at the same time: but this obligation occasioned the reception of a fund of genuine knowledge into these gloomy repositories; and perhaps prevented the very faculty of interchanging our ideas by writing, or of increasing our stores of knowledge by the perusal of books, from being once more sunk into oblivion.

That a zeal for discipline was not totally extinguished amongst all the members of the Christian church, appears from the frequency of particular councils for its enforcement during this

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\* The loss, says Dr. Jortin, is not to be questioned; the recovery is more questionable.



century. The various abuses they endeavored to rectify, and the restraints they attempted to impose, would, if no other monument existed, convince us that there were few crimes, of which a minister of religion might not be supposed to be guilty. The arrogance and profligacy of the clergy has been already remarked; their hospitality may in some degree be conceived by a canon of the council of Maccon, in the year 585, which enacts, that bishops shall not keep mastiffs to worry beggars. Towards the close of the preceding, or the commencement of the sixth century, the bishops, who had hitherto exercised the power of forming their own liturgies, agreed to conform to that of the metropolitan church. The national liturgies, in the western empire, commenced upon its being divided into different kingdoms. In these liturgies different creeds were used, varying in expression, though agreeing in doctrine, previous to the formation of the Nicene Creed. Creeds were not for a considerable time, introduced into the daily worship of the church. In the year 515, Timothy, the successor of Macedonius, bishop of Constantinople, to demonstrate his detestation of his predecessor, whom he considered as an enemy to the Nicene faith, commanded the Nicene creed to be repeated every time divine service was performed in the church. Previous to this time, it had only been recited on Mondy-Thursday, when the bishop catechised those who were to be baptized at Easter; and was repeated at Antioch whenever the sacrament was administered. Gregory the Great composed the Roman mass, or missal, distinguished by his name, which at first was intended for the particular use of the Romish church, but was afterwards enlarged, improved, and admitted into other churches. Superstitious practices had crept even into the performance of the common devotions of the church: and it was ordered by Vigilius, that those who celebrated mass should always direct their faces towards the east.

The rite of baptism does not appear to have been administered with any variations from the forms of the preceding century: but material alterations in the celebration of the Lord's Supper took place during the pontificate of Gregory the Great, who introduced a number of ceremonies into almost every part of religious worship. Frequency of communion, from the superstitious opinions which prevailed respecting this rite, had abated by degrees: it appeared, indeed, in some places, in danger of being wholly laid aside. In a council at Arles, in the year 506, the laity were commanded to communicate three times annually, on the three great festivals of Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas. A reverence for the sacramental elements was strongly insisted upon by the clergy; and as it was customary to conse-

crate a larger portion, than was immediately necessary for the communicants, in order that it might be in readiness to be distributed to the sick, it was, in the year 567, enacted in the council at Tours, that it should no longer be deposited in a chest, but upon the altar, to excite the devotion of the people. The holy water, or a mixture of salt and water, which was made use of for sprinkling those who entered into or departed from the church, is first mentioned in an edict of Figilius, in the year 538, but was probably introduced anterior to that period. The Tonsure of the priests, amongst other ceremonial observances, was very generally enforced in this century, and became indeed an essential part of the ordination of the clergy. This practice occasioned in the church nearly as violent disputes, as those concerning the celebration of Easter. The question agitated was, whether the hair of the priests and monks should be shaven on the forepart of the head, from ear to ear, in the form of a semicircle; or on the top of the head, in the form of a circle, as an emblem of the crown of thorns worn by Jesus Christ. The sects usually shaved according to the former, and the Romish missionaries conformably to the latter practice, but the time when the custom was introduced is unknown. The early fathers of the church had endeavored, by their exhortations, to prevent the extremes of cutting the hair like the priests of Isis and Serapis, and that of wearing long hair in imitation of the luxurious manners of the barbarian soldiery. Their followers had, however, in this, as in many other instances, no reluctance to the imitation of foreign superstition; and that mark, which once distinguished the priests of the Egyptian deities, has since that period marked the heads of Christian prelates; and has obtained the name of the Roman tonsure.

Every superstitious practice of this period met with a steady and zealous patron in Gregory the Great, who encouraged the use of pictures and images in churches, and strongly insisted upon the efficacy of relics. Gregory refused, however, to transport any part of the body of St. Paul to Constantinople, since he asserted that this sacred relic was endued with powers so formidable, that the temerity of those who dared to approach it was punished by their being seized with terror, or perhaps visited with a frightful apparition. He graciously sent to the empress, who had preferred this request, a portion of the filings of St. Paul's chain, to place in the church then building at Constantinople in honor of that apostle. The ingenuity of the relic-mongers favored them with a happy device for multiplying the virtues of relics, without a multiplication of the relics themselves. Instead of distributing the pious remains of a saint, they touched the body with a piece of cloth, called *Brandeum*,



which immediately received the wonderful power of healing diseases, and even sometimes of working still more extraordinary miracles. Some impious Greeks, having dared to doubt of the efficacy of such relics, were convinced of their infidelity, by Leo, bishop of Rome, who took a pair of scissors, and cut the sacred cloth, from which drops of blood are said to have immediately gushed out.

As pomp and splendor were affected in the performance of every religious rite, the churches vied with each other in magnificence. A curious altar was presented to the church of St. Sophia, by Justinian and Theodora, composed of every material which could be procured. Gold and silver, every kind of precious stone, wood, and metals, were blended together; and the table, composed of this mass, was adorned with an inscription, in which the royal donors solemnly made an offering of it to Christ, and entreated him, that they, together with the empire might be preserved in the orthodox faith. Many festivals were, during this century, introduced into the church, the most considerable of which was the feast of the Purification of the blessed Virgin. The Lupercalia, or the feast of Pan, which was constantly celebrated by the Pagans, with burning tapers, was succeeded by the Christian festival of the Purification. Like its predecessor, this feast was solemnized, with a blaze of tapers; and was called Candlemas, from the lights used on that occasion. The day of consecrating a church was also in many places observed as an anniversary festival.

National wars for the extension of dominion, and continual attempts to enforce obedience to spiritual authority, were circumstances little favorable to the tranquillity of the Christians, during the sixth century. Fewer sects, however, arose during this, than at the preceding period; and some of those divisions, which had most successfully assailed the peace of the Christian world, were nearly terminated. Donatism breathed her expiring sighs; and the doctrines of Arius, which were so extensively embraced, were forsaken by an infinite number of those by whom they were professed, and have ever since been confined to, comparatively, a very inconsiderable number of Christians. Eutychianism, favored by the imperial smiles, was however revived from the langor and oblivion into which it had been visibly sinking. But it owed still more to the conduct of Jacob Baradaeus. By his activity and eloquence, this drooping sect was restored to life and vigor; its votaries were numberless; its different factions were reconciled; and its credit and authority were extended through Egypt; Abyssinia, Mesopotamia, and Armenia. The newly revived sect assumed the name of their new chief: and they are still distinguished by the appella-

tion of Jacobites; and to this day constitute the bulk of those Christians who reside within the jurisdiction of the bishops of Antioch and Alexandria.

The doctrine concerning the incorruptibility of the body of Christ, though espoused by the emperor, was steadily opposed by the orthodox party, who bestowed upon their adversaries the names of Aphthartodocitæ, Phantasiasts, and Manicheans, from some real or fanciful resemblance to that sect. Amongst the most zealous of these defenders of the faith, was Severus, bishop of Antioch, who asserted the corruptibility of the body of Christ. The adherents of Severus were, in consequence of this opinion, styled Corrupticolæ, Phthartolatræ, and Severians. Themistius, a deacon, and one of the Severian sect, pursuing still further these frivolous speculations, asserted that Jesus Christ, as a man, might be ignorant of certain things. They, who adopted this sentiment, were distinguished by the name of Agnætæ, or by that of their leader. The doctrines of Themistius were opposed by the Theodosians, the followers of the degraded patriarch of Alexandria.

The Eutychian controversy produced, towards the close of this century, a new sect called the Thitheists. This sect, which taught, that the Father, Son, and Spirit, were three coequal, distinct beings, who partook of one common undivided nature, divided into the Philoponists and Cononites, according to the names of their respective leaders, who agreed in the doctrine of the three persons in the Godhead, but differed in some opinions concerning the resurrection of the body. Peter Damian, the patriarch of Alexandria, in attacking their errors, proceeded too far on the other side, and incurred the charge of Sabellianism. The Damianists distinguished the divine essence from the three persons, and denied that each person was God, when considered abstractedly from the other two; but asserted that there was a common divinity, by the joint participation of which, each person was God. The Tritheists, together with the other sects of the Eutychians, fell into that of the Jacobites, a denomination which is common to them all; although some, from the countries they inhabit, are distinguished by the names of Coptes, and Armenians.

If, in traversing the obscure and mazy paths of superstition and ignorance, which distinguished this century, we take only a cursory view of surrounding objects, we shall probably be excused by our fellow-travelers, who will find few refreshing and cultivated shades to invite their stay, few blooming and elegant productions to arrest their attention. The dreary night of ignorance began to gloom; and the road to truth, no longer pleasant and cheerful, was pursued through dismal and inextricable labyrinths.



The interests of real learning and philosophy are so necessarily connected with truth, that, in an age when duplicity and falsehood were so generally employed in the propagation of all opinions, we cannot be surprised to observe the dominion of real science nearly destroyed. The liberal rewards and honors, which were offered by the emperors for the encouragement of learning, were counteracted by their attachment to theological disputation, which naturally contracts the faculties of the human mind. Those bounties, which should have been directed to the reward of ingenious exertions, were conferred upon the subtle disputant, and the nice investigation of absurd and unmeaning terms. Nor were the schools erected under the jurisdiction of cathedrals and monasteries, calculated for inculcating and disseminating knowledge, since their unskilful and illiterate teachers consider philosophy and literature, as not only unnecessary, but pernicious.

The later Platonism, or that compound of Pythagorean, Platonic, and Chaldaic principles, which had been so popular amongst the pagan philosophers, received a severe blow from the exertions of Justinian against paganism, and his imposition of perpetual silence upon the Athenian schools. Seven philosophical teachers of the Grecian superstition, with grief and indignation, agreed to depart from the empire, and to seek in a foreign land, the freedom which was denied in their native country. They had heard, and they credulously believed, that the republic of Plato was realized in the despotic government of Persia; but they were soon convinced of their mistake. The monarch Chosroes concealed the most savage dispositions under the disguise of philosophy; and they were extremely scandalized by the licentious practices of an eastern nation, so different from the Christians, whose doctrines they affected to despise, but whose precepts they could not but approve. They made a precipitate retreat, but they returned not to their former reputation; their numbers had declined, and their followers disappeared. They terminated their lives in peace and obscurity; and with them ended the long list of Grecian philosophers. To this sublime and ingenious, but in many respects fanciful system, that of Aristotle soon succeeded, which was introduced into the theological disputes; and, like its precursor, served to confound and perplex the reasonings of the Christian world.

Boethius, a senator of Rome, and an admirer of that wisdom which illuminated ancient Greece, was the most distinguished person who introduced the Aristotelian philosophy into the explanation of the doctrines of Christ. The abilities of Boethius gave celebrity to every opinion he embraced; and few were disposed to dissent from the sentiments of the first philosopher,

orator, and theologian of the sixth century. His misfortunes were not less remarkable than his literary abilities. Born to the possession of an ample fortune, and descended from one of the noblest families at Rome, Boethius prosecuted in ease and independence, the most abstruse or the most elegant studies, and adorned all the duties of public and private life, by his strict regard to justice; by his eloquence, which was always exerted in the cause of humanity and innocence; and by his liberality to the distressed. Such conspicuous merit was felt and rewarded by the discerning Theodoric, who honored this illustrious senator with the titles of Consul, and Master of the Offices; and afterwards gratified his paternal ambition, by creating his two sons Consuls at the same time, and at an early age. "Prosperous in his fame and fortunes, in his public honors and private alliances, in the cultivation of science, and the consciousness of virtue, Boethius might have been styled happy, if that precarious epithet could be safely applied before the last term of the life of man.

"A philosopher, liberal of his wealth and parsimonious of his time, might be insensible to the common allurements of ambition, the thirst of gold and employment: and some credit may be due to the asseveration of Boethius, that he had reluctantly obeyed the divine Plato, who enjoins every virtuous citizen to rescue the state from the usurpation of vice and ignorance. For the integrity of his public conduct, he appeals to the memory of his country. He had always pitied, and often relieved, the distress of the provincials, whose fortunes were exhausted by public and private rapine; and Boethius alone had courage to oppose the tyranny of the barbarians, elated by conquest, excited by avarice, and, as he complains, encouraged by impunity. In these honorable contests, his spirit soared above the consideration of danger, and perhaps of prudence. The disciple of Plato might exaggerate the infirmities of nature, and the imperfections of society; and the mildest form of a Gothic kingdom, even the weight of allegiance and gratitude, must be insupportable to the free spirit of a Roman patriot. But the favor and fidelity of Boethius declined in just proportion with the public happiness; and an unworthy colleague was imposed, to divide and control the power of the master of the offices. In the last gloomy season of Theodoric, he indignantly felt that he was a slave; but as his master had power only over his life, he stood without arms and without fear, against the face of an angry barbarian, who had been provoked to believe that the safety of the senate was incompatible with his own. The senator Albinus was accused, and already convicted, on the presumption of *hoping*, as it was said, the liberty of Rome. "If Albinus be



criminal," exclaimed the orator, "the senate and myself are all guilty of the same crime. If we are innocent, Albinus is equally entitled to the protection of the laws." These laws might not have punished the simple and barren wish of an unattainable blessing; that they would have shown less indulgence to the rash confession of Boethius, that, had he known of a conspiracy, the tyrant never should. The advocate of Albinus was soon involved in the danger, and perhaps the guilt, of his client; their signature (which they denied as a forgery) was affixed to the original address, inviting the emperor to deliver Italy from the Goths; and three witnesses of honorable rank, perhaps of infamous reputation, attested the treasonable designs of the Roman patrician. Yet his innocence must be presumed, since he was deprived by Theodoric of the means of justification, and rigorously confined in the tower of Pavia, while the senate at the distance of five hundred miles, pronounced a sentence of confiscation and death against the most illustrious of its members. At the command of the barbarians, the occult science of a philosopher was stigmatized with the names of sacrilege and magic. A devout and dutiful attachment to the senate was condemned as criminal, by the trembling voices of the senators themselves; and their ingratitude decreed the wish or prediction of Boethius, that, after him, none should be found guilty of the same offence.

"While Boethius, oppressed with fetters, expected each moment the sentence or the stroke of death, he composed, in the tower of Pavia, the *Consolation of Philosophy*; a golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully, but which claims incomparable merit, from the barbarism of the times, and the situation of the author. The celestial guide whom he had so long invoked at Rome and at Athens, now condescended to illumine his dungeon, to revive his courage, and to pour into his wounds her salutary balm. She taught him to compare his long prosperity and his recent distress, and to conceive new hopes from the inconstancy of fortune. Reason had informed him of the precarious condition of her gifts; experience had satisfied him of their real value; he had enjoyed them without guilt; he might resign them without a sigh; and calmly disdain the impotent malice of his enemies, who had left him happiness, since they had left him virtue. From the earth, Boethius ascended to heaven, in search of the SUPREME GOOD; explored the metaphysical labyrinth of chance and destiny, of prescience and free-will, of time and eternity; and attempted to reconcile the perfect attributes of the Deity, with the apparent disorders of his moral and physical government. Such topics of consolation, so obvious, so vague, or so abstruse, are ineffectual to subdue the

feelings of human nature. Yet the sense of misfortune may be diverted by the labor of thought; and the sage, who could artfully combine in the same work the various riches of philosophy, poetry, and eloquence, must already have possessed the intrepid calmness which he affected to seek. Suspense, one of the worst of evils, was at length determined by the ministers of death, who executed, and perhaps exceeded, the inhuman mandate of Theodoric. A strong cord was fastened round the head of Boethius, and forcibly tightened, till his eyes almost started from their sockets; and some mercy may be discovered in the milder torture of beating him with clubs till he expired. But his genius survived, to diffuse a ray of knowledge over the darkest ages of the Latin world; the writings of the philosopher were translated by the most glorious of the English kings; and the third emperor of the name of Otho removed to a more honorable tomb the bones of a Catholic saint, who, from his Arian persecutors, had acquired the honors of martyrdom, and the fame of miracles.

The crimes committed by this illustrious senator against the monarch of Rome; were not confined to the treasonable wish of restoring the liberty of the people, and the power of the senate; Boethius had written in defence of the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, and in his zeal for religion, had attacked, not only the Nestorians and Eutychians, but even Arianism itself, though professed by Theodoric. A knowledge of all the arts and sciences was diffused by the indefatigable pen of Boethius. In the celebrated work *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, he has exhausted every topic of consolation which the philosophy of the Grecian schools could suggest; but has entirely omitted the firmer supports, which are afforded by Christianity under the afflictions of the present state. It has been conjectured, and probably the conjecture may be well founded, that Boethius intended to have perfected his treatise by the addition of a sixth book, on the topic of Christian consolations. As it is evidently transmitted in an imperfect state, it is not reasonable to suppose, from the omission, that Boethius was more sensible to the consolations of a philosopher than those of a Christian, or was a firmer believer in the doctrines of stoicism, than in those of the gospel.

The various controversies which engaged the attention of the Christian world, produced a multitude of writers, more considerable indeed from their numbers than their abilities. The errors of the pagans were attacked by Philoponus, and those of the Jews by Leontius of Neapolis, and Isidore of Seville. The names of Anastasius, John Scythopolis, Leontius, Zachary of Mytilene, Fecundus, Gulgentis, Maxentius, and Eulogius, are



distinguished amongst the controversial writers of this century. But the greater part of them, in detailing their own perplexed opinions, were little calculated to convert their readers; and must, by the substitution of rancor and vehemence in the place of argument and reason, have induced disgust rather than conviction.

Like the controversialists, the historical writers of this century are little distinguished for their excellence. A recollection of the histories of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, was compiled by Theodore, who continued the historical accounts to the reign of the elder Justin. A compilation of the same materials was made by Cassiodorus, to which he added a short chronicle. Basil of Cilicia, also wrote an ecclesiastical history, which was continued by Evagrius, but greatly corrupted by fabulous accounts. The annals of France, by the famous Gregory of Tours, are written in a style utterly devoid of simplicity and elegance; and his eight books of the lives of the Saints are replete with weakness, superstition, and credulity; nor do the inconsistent accounts in the work, *concerning the destruction of Britain*, by our countryman Gildas, deserve a much higher character. Those historians who were the most deserving of attention were Procopius and Agathias, the former of whom accompanied Belisarius in the Italian and African wars; and acquired so considerable a share of reputation under the successive emperors, that he was honored with the office of Quæstor, and with the important station of Præfect of Constantinople. He composed two books concerning the Persian war, two books of the Vandalic, and four of the Gothic. In these performances, wherever he has occasion to mention Justinian or Theodora, he always speaks of them in the most honorable terms; and, in his account of the *Edifices of Justinian*, extols the emperor for his devotion and liberality, his mildness and magnificence, and the empress for her piety and zeal. But the external professions of courtiers do not always accord with their real sentiments; and Procopius, if he be, as there is much reason to believe, the author of the *Secret Anecdotes*, has more than unsaid every thing he had advanced in favor of his benefactors, and has left a perpetual record of their dishonor and of his own duplicity. The historical accounts of Procopius terminated in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Justinian; but were continued by Agathias, who published his history in the year 593. Each of the writers has been charged with paganism; and, however this accusation may have been converted in favor of the former, against the latter it remains in full force. If the charge against both be true, they are distinguished by being the two last pagan histo-

rians who have written in Greek, and of whose works there are any considerable remains. Religious poetry was, during this century, cultivated for very different purposes: for that of giving popularity to the fabulous miracles of the saints; and in the more laudable view of endeavouring to embellish the truths of the gospel. Fortunatus composed in verse the life of St. Martin; and Arator made a poetical translation of the Acts of the Apostles. Amongst the other religious poets of this century, were Orontius, who wrote a Warning to the Faithful; and Columbanus, the disciple of the British abbot Congal, whose ardent zeal for monachism was attended with such success, that his followers were dispersed through Ireland, Gaul, Germany, and Switzerland.

Were we to judge of the excellence of the commentators of this period, by the number of their expositions, we should form an exalted idea of their value. But they were, with few exceptions, an ill-disciplined band, little calculated for the performance of important actions. Commentaries upon Scripture were composed by Justus, who wrote upon the Song of Solomon; by Avitus, upon the Apocalypse; by Primasius, upon the Epistle to the Romans: and by Victor of Capua, who composed the Harmony of the Gospels. The most distinguished expositors of the sixth century were, Procopius of Gaza, upon the book of Isaiah; Cassiodorus, who commented upon the Psalms, the Canticles, and the other parts of scripture; and Gregory the Great, who expounded the Book of Kings, and the Song of Solomon. To the merit of being a firm consubstantialist, Cassiodorus added those virtues which recommended him to the most exalted approbation of the Arian monarchs under whom he lived, who rewarded his distinguished excellence by the gift of some of the most considerable offices in their disposal. After the enjoyment of several public honors, Cassiodorus, at the advanced period of one hundred years, closed his life in a monastery, where, in tranquility and retirement, he had long employed himself in the pursuits of literature, which were enlivened by his knowledge of philosophy and mechanics.

Gregory, whose birth, rank, advancement of the papal power, and whose literary abilities, acquired him, in this age of ignorance, the appellation of Great, was descended from an illustrious patrician family. His rank and abilities, at a very early age, procured him the office of Prefect of Rome; but he relinquished all the pleasures and all the employments of a secular life, to devote himself to retirement, in one of the monasteries which he had erected with his ample patrimony. His retreat was, however, distinguished by his reputed talents, and by the circumstances with which it was accompanied: and Greg-



ory was soon summoned from his retirement, by his appointment as deacon of the church, and his subsequent office of nuncio from the apostolic see to the Byzantine court. In this situation he boldly assumed, in the name of St. Peter a tone of independent dignity, which would have been criminal and dangerous in the most illustrious layman. He also engaged in a dispute with the patriarch of Constantinople, whether the bodies of the just, at the general resurrection, were to be really solid, or thinner than air. He returned to Rome with increased reputation; and on the death of Pelagius II, for whose recovery he had distinguished himself by the frequency of his public intercessions, he was dragged from the cloister to the papal throne, by the unanimous voice of the clergy, the senate, and the people. He resisted, however, or appeared to resist this elevation, and secretly conveyed himself to the neighbouring woods and mountains. This retirement might perhaps afford leisure for the abatement of his dread of the pontifical dignity; or, as security naturally renders men fearless, he might become less cautious in concealing his retreat: however this may be, the abode of Gregory was discovered, as it was reported, by a celestial light; he was brought forth from his concealment, consecrated, and invested with the full possession of the Roman see. In this station, which he enjoyed more than thirteen years, his labours were invariably directed to what he conceived the benefit of religion, or to the aggrandizement of the church of Rome. His inordinate ambition he endeavored to conceal, perhaps from himself, under a mask of the most profound humility; and condemned, in his rival, the patriarch of Constantinople, the title of Universal Bishop, which he was too haughty to concede, and too feeble to assume; and which he contrasted and opposed, by styling himself *Servus Servorum Dei*, servant of the servants of God. Superstition received, in Gregory, a potent and zealous auxiliary; his attachment to relics, to ceremonies, to the splendid variety and charge of sacerdotal garments, and to the pomp of public worship, was extreme. Till the last days of his life, he officiated in the canon of the mass, which continued above three hours, and which was rendered more splendid by music, and by the introduction of solemn and pompous rites in its celebration. The liberality and moderation of the Roman bishop were very conspicuous in his behaviour towards the Jews, who resided within the limits of his jurisdiction; but his pious hatred was strongly exerted against the Christian sectaries, who dared to question the validity of the doctrines of the church. The numerous publications of Gregory rank him amongst the most voluminous authors of the sixth century: yet he decried human learning; and, with some justice perhaps, showed his dislike of

those who must have contemned him, by committing the works of a number of classical writers to the flames, amongst which was the historian Livy. He is charged with having still further evinced his zeal against every species of pagan excellence, by the demolition of several valuable monuments of ancient magnificence; lest those, who visited Rome, might be induced to pay more attention to triumphal arches, and profane productions, than to sacred things, Gregory was a rigid disciplinarian; and loudly insisted upon the perfect celibacy of the clergy, which he took the utmost pains to ascertain. The judgment he has shown, in some instances, in his literary performances, is debased by the most excessive credulity and weakness; and his Dialogues contain a multitude of absurd and ridiculous fables, which are dignified by the names of Miracles, and the Lives of the Saints, and confirmed by the credulity or the craft of this pious pontiff, in order to advance the credit of his religion. Posterity has paid to the memory of Gregory a return of the same tribute which he liberally granted to the virtues of his own or the preceding generations; and, after his death, those celestial honors, which at all times have been freely bestowed by the authority of the popes, were paid to Gregory the Great: who, however, is the last of that order whose name is inscribed in the Calendar of Saints.

Amongst the patrons and encouragers of literature during this century, must be enumerated the emperor Justinian, to whom several literary performances have been ascribed. At a very early period of his reign, this monarch projected a reformation of the Roman jurisprudence; and, in conjunction with nine others of the most celebrated professors of the civil law, the learned Tribonian at length accomplished this arduous, but necessary task, which Justinian had prescribed. The new *Code* was perfected in fourteen months, and honored by the name and signature of the emperor. A more arduous operation still remained; to extract the spirit of jurisprudence from the decisions and conjectures, the questions and disputes, of the Roman civilians. Seventeen lawyers, with Tribonian at their head, composed, from these materials the *Pandects*, which were accomplished in three years. To these were added, by the command of the emperor, and the diligence of the imperial delegates, the *Institutes*, which are divided into an elementary treatise, comprised in four books; and, like the *Code* and *Pandects*, to which they were designed as an introduction, are honored with the name of the emperor. This *Code* made its appearance in the year 528, and the *Institutes* in 533, a month before the publication of the *Pandects*, which had however been previously compiled. In 534, the emperor published a more accu-



late edition of the Code, which he enriched with several of his own laws, and some decisions in the most intricate and difficult points of jurisprudence; and gave to this performance the title of *Novels*. In a rescript of Justinian, dated in the year 541. no mention is made of the consuls; and from this period, the custom of counting years from the consulates, which had prevailed from the time of the Roman republic, entirely ceased; and the year of the reigning emperor was introduced, and continued to be used: though, some years previous to this, Dionysius Exiguus, in his *Cyclus Paschalis*, had introduced the mode of computation now generally used in the Christian world, from the birth of Christ.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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### THE SEVENTH CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—OF GOVERNMENT, DOCTRINE, RITES, AND CEREMONIES, IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY.—OF THE SECTS WHICH APPEARED IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY.—OF LEARNING AND LEARNED MEN IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY.

THE reigns of Justin, Tiberius, and Maurice, the immediate successors of Justinian, were distinguished by a rare but happy chasm in the ecclesiastical affairs of the east: nor did the imperial interference occasion any alteration during the reign of the ambitious Phocas, the murderer and successor of the amiable and unfortunate Maurice. On his ascension to the throne, he made a solemn promise to the Byzantine patriarch, to defend and to preserve inviolate the orthodox faith of the councils of Nice and Chalcedon; and in this solitary instance the perfidious prince was firm to his engagement: nor did he concern himself more with the doctrines than with the practice of religion. The enormities of his conduct soon deprived him of a sceptre which he so unworthily retained. Exasperated by injuries, the people of Constantinople were easily induced to forget their allegiance to a cruel and insidious prince; and Heraclius, the African Prætor, had little difficulty in obtaining possession of the imperial throne.

The orthodox zeal of the new emperor did not permit him to be an indifferent spectator of religious affairs. He engaged with warmth in the nice decisions of theology; and his ardor for religion was rewarded by the gratitude of the people and clergy, who, in his war against the Persians, recruited his exhausted treasury with a considerable sum, derived from the sale of the magnificent gold and silver vessels, which had been appropriated neither to the decoration nor to the uses of the church. On his victorious return from the Persian war, Heraclius entered in the theological question, which for some years had been



much agitated, concerning the existence of *two wills* in Christ. The orthodox belief consisted in his possessing the wills and operations peculiar both to his divinity and humanity. The doctrine of one will was, however, strongly insisted upon the many of the clergy, and was adopted by the emperor, who conceived that the profession of a doctrine, certainly harmless, and possibly not quite without foundation, might reconcile the Jacobites of Egypt and Syria (whose opinions it approached) to the orthodox faith. Heraclius, therefore, indulged the laudable but impracticable design of effecting ecclesiastical union.—Zeal for religion might perhaps instigate him to this measure; but probably policy had some share in a design which was intended to prevent the defection of numbers, who, like the Nestorians, might secede, not only from the church, but from the empire.

Prompted by these motives, the imperial theologian, by the advice and concurrence of several of the Monophysite party, published an edict which asserted, that, after the union of the two natures in Jesus Christ, there existed only one will and one operation. Athanasius, the Armenian bishop of the Monophysites, and Sergius, the Byzantine patriarch, who favored that sect, had labored to persuade the emperor, that this declaration would induce the Monophysite party to receive the Chalcedonian decrees; and, provided it were assented to by the orthodox, would terminate the controversy. Cyrus, bishop of Phasis, a zealous Monothelite, or assertor of one will in Christ, was promoted by the emperor to the vacant see of Alexandria, and confirmed the favorite opinion of his benefactor by the decrees of a provincial council. This perplexed doctrine, illustrated and modified according to the opinions and ingenuity of its different adherents, was explained by them in terms which admitted of such various significations, that it was accepted by considerable numbers, who were restored to communion with the church.

But however acceptable this romantic project for the restoration of union, amongst a people who delighted in controversial disquisitions, might be to many; still, although it was supported by the efforts of Honorius, the Roman pontiff, and of the Byzantine patriarch, it met with a violent opposition, and occasioned contests not less pernicious to the tranquility of the church, than those which it was designed to prevent.

The emperor, and the heads of the eastern and western churches, were regarded as the betrayers of the orthodox faith; and the heretical Monothelites, and the schismatical assertors of two wills, regarded each other with mutual distrust and implacable aversion. Disappointed in these endeavors for ecclesias-

tical harmony, Heraclius had recourse to another method, and published the *Ecthesis*, or Exposition of the Faith; in which all controversies upon this subject were strictly prohibited. This exposition was the production of Sergius, bishop of Constantinople, and was approved by his successor Pyrrhus, and several of the eastern bishops. But it met at Rome with a very different reception. On the decease of Honorius, the more orthodox Severian had obtained the pontificate, who continued warmly to condemn the Monothelite doctrine, and to oppose the *Ecthesis*; and it was openly condemned in a council by his successor John the Fourth, and by Theodore, who in the year 642 succeeded to the papal see.

The short and tumultuous reigns of Constantine and Heraclion admitted not of the imperial interference in religious disputes: they still continued, however, to disturb the peace of the Christian world; and Constans had scarcely assumed the purple, before he published the *Type*, an edict of a similar nature to that of his grandfather Heraclius, which enjoined profound silence upon this long-disputed question. This proclamation might suppress, but could not extinguish, the heated passions of the theological disputants. Sophronius, bishop of Jerusalem, had been among the most zealous opposers of Monothelism, and had condemned this heretical opinion in a provincial council. His labors in the cause of orthodoxy ended not with the subjugation of his see by the Saracens, in the year 636; he still continued, by his writings and example, to animate the clergy and the monks. They detected a latent heresy in the language, and even in the silence, of the Greeks; they were joined by the Latin churches; the obedience of pope Honorius was retracted and censured; and the execrable heresy of the Monothelites, which was said to have revived the errors of Manes, Appollinaris, and Eutyches, was formally condemned. As the representative of the western church, pope Martin I. in his Lateran synod anathematized the perfidious and guilty silence of the Greeks. One hundred and five bishops, chiefly the inhabitants of those parts of the western empire which remained in subjection to Constans, presumed to reprobate his execrable *Type*, no less than the impious *Ecthesis* of Heraclius. Such an insult could not pass with impunity. Martin was removed from Rome, and was afterwards exiled to Naxos, a small island in the Archipelago; and his oracle, Maximus, a seditious monk, of the same party, was banished to Bizyca.

Whatever had been the perverseness and obstinacy of this pontiff and his associate, humanity must, notwithstanding, recoil at their sufferings. Martin was, after a series of expedients in



order to escape punishment, taken prisoner by the exarch Caliopas, and sent to his place of banishment. His voyage, which was embittered by apprehension, captivity, disease, and insult, was succeeded by a year's imprisonment, in which he endured extraordinary hardships. Nor were his suffering mitigated at the expiration of that period: on his return to the imperial court, he was exposed to the insults of the populace, by whom he was reviled and contemned as a rebel, and was confined in a common prison. After a captivity of more than three months, during which he was oppressed with a violent dysentery, and denied the comforts of suitable food, he was summoned before the senate; refused the indulgence of a seat, though from disease and weakness he was unable to stand; and was charged with treason against the state. His asseverations of innocence, and the powerful plea he exhibited of the impossibility of his committing the crime, were ineffectual. The unhappy pontiff was divested of his sacerdotal garments, loaded with chains, was ordered to be led through the city, preceded by the executioner bearing a drawn sword, and at length to be cut in pieces. Immediate death was not however inflicted upon the miserable Martin; he was thrown into successive prisons, and sent into banishment on the inhospitable shores of the Tauric Chersonesus; where a famine, and the inattention of his friends, who neglected, or who perhaps feared, to administer to his relief, added extreme penury to the overflowing cup of his sufferings, and he died amidst these calamities in 656.

Though the spirit of discord was, by these severe proceedings, in some degree repressed, it was not overcome. The bishops of Rome successively adhering to the decrees of the Lateran council, and the example of Martin, continued in a state of separation from the Greek church. In order to unite, and if possible to restore peace to the church, the emperor Constantine Pogonatus, by the advice of Agatho, the Roman pontiff, convened at Constantinople a general council, which is called the sixth. This assembly commenced in November, 680; and, after eighteen meetings, terminated in the following September, after having confirmed the decrees of the Romish synods by the condemnation of the Monothelites, and of the deceased pontiff Honorius. The emperor presided personally in this convention, and the arguments or the persuasions of the Duothelites were of sufficient efficacy to induce the son of Constans to relinquish his infant creed, while the example, or perhaps the influence, of the royal proselyte converted the Byzantine pontiff and a majority of bishops. The Monothelites with their chief, Macarius, bishop of Antioch, were condemned to the temporal and spiritual pains of heresy. The eastern pro-

vinces condescended to accept the documents of the west; the creed which teaches that two wills, and two operations, were existent in Jesus Christ, was finally determined; and the articles of the Catholic faith irrevocably defined. During the debates of this synod, the aged and fanatical Polychronius was called upon to declare his faith; who proposed a more summary decision of the orthodox belief, than the controversies of this assembly, by offering to restore to life the body of a dead man. Many of the judges in this cause were too well acquainted with the nature of modern miracles, not to have some reason to be apprehensive of this mode of decision: they probably took care, however, that the body was actually dead: and consented to the trial. But in vain did Polychronius deposit his written confession of faith upon the body; in vain did he whisper, during several hours, into the ears of the deceased: the vital spark was totally extinguished, and the insane ecclesiastic, who, notwithstanding the failure of this proof, still persisted in the doctrine of one will and one operation in Christ, was degraded from his sacerdotal function, and anathematized by the clergy and people.

The state of religion in the western parts of the empire underwent few alterations during this century. Those claims to dominion and supremacy, which at first were but faintly urged by the Roman pontiffs, were continually extending, and as continually successful: new titles, and even those which had occasioned the warmest opposition from the followers of St. Peter, when conferred upon their brethren of Constantinople, were eagerly sought for, and gratefully received, by the bishops of Rome for themselves. The artful Boniface III. who had for some years resided as nuncio at the imperial court, did not disdain to insinuate himself into the good opinion of the infamous Phocas, nor to receive with gratitude the effects of his favor. The Romish patriarchs were permitted in future to assume the title of Oecumenical or Universal bishops: this title, however, was unaccompanied by any new powers, and only served to increase the animosity which invariably subsisted between the patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople; the latter of whom saw with extreme uneasiness the deprivation of his own dignities, and the accumulation of those which were possessed by his haughty rival. The title of Pope, which in fact merely signifies the name of Father, was equally bestowed upon the bishop of Rome and those who possessed the other considerable sees; and Cyprian had been complimented with the title of Pope of Carthage, by Cornelius bishop of Rome. About the seventh century the prelates of the Roman see began, however, to appropriate this title to themselves. But the demands of ambition



and vanity are insatiable: and the leaders of the Romish church were so little contented with the honors they had already acquired, that Agatho laid claim to a privilege never yet enjoyed by man; and asserted, that the church at Rome never had erred, nor could err in any point, and that all its constitutions ought to be as implicitly received as if they had been delivered by the divine voice of St. Peter. These insolent pretensions to infallibility, when they were first asserted, were resisted by many bishops of the western churches and by several princes. The Spanish monarchs, particularly, chose not to consider the Roman pontiff even as the head of the church; but claimed nearly the same degree of supremacy over the churches in their dominions; which the kings of England, since the reign of Henry VIII. have exercised over theirs.

The rage for religious disputations, which was so general in the eastern parts of the empire, extended, though in an inferior degree, its influence to the west. The Pelagian controversy was warmly agitated both in Gaul and Britain; and considerable numbers of the Lombards, uninfluenced by the example of the court, still continued their attachment to the doctrines of Arius. The sceptre, no longer swayed by the hands of a firm consubstantialist, was transferred to the valiant Rotharis, a zealous Arian. His regard to justice was not however, in this instance, less conspicuous than in the other transactions of his reign: he forbore to compel his Catholic subjects to the violation of their consciences, by an external profession of his own religious creed; but in all the cities of his dominions permitted the appointment of two bishops, an Arian, and a Consubstantialist. The other barbarian princes continued in a firm adherence to the decrees of the council of Nice. They presided in the ecclesiastical councils, entered into every debate concerning faith or discipline, and their barbarian subjects were admitted to the performance of the sacred functions of religion.

The increase of Christianity was beheld by the Jews with the utmost rancor of which the human mind is susceptible; and this passion was continually augmented by the severe edicts which at various times had been promulgated against them by their Christian rulers. The wars between the Persians and the Roman emperor afforded them an opportunity for the gratification of their revenge. The conquest of Jerusalem was meditated and achieved by the zeal and avarice of Crosroes, who enlisted for this holy warfare an army of six and twenty thousand Jews; these saw with exultation the capture of the city; the flames bursting out from the stately churches of Helena and Constantine; the demolition of the sepulchre of Christ;

and the precious relic of the cross conveyed, together with its sacred guardian, the Christian patriarch, into Persia. The massacre or captivity of ninety thousand Christians was the consequence of the conquest of Chosrose. Many of them were disposed of by the inhuman Persian to his Jewish adherents, and in their subjection to these masters endured evils which were poorly compensated by the gift of life. The victories of Heraclius restored them once more to the enjoyment of their rights; but his conduct towards the Jews was marked by a spirit of revenge, unworthy of a conqueror who had generously set at liberty fifty thousand Persian captives.

These unhappy people were destined to experience the severe vengeance of the exasperated monarch; they were ignominiously banished from the seat of their fondest wishes, from the Holy city; and the miserable captives were compelled to a punishment the greatest that could be conceived, that of receiving the sacred rite of baptism in the Christian church.

The unhappy situation of this people was considerably increased by the punishments which their factious and seditious conduct excited not only in the eastern but western parts of the empire. Their wealth, however, rather than their contumacy, or their attachment to the Mosaical rights, might occasion many of the evils for which their religion was the avowed pretext.

Sisebut, the Gothic monarch in Spain, suddenly attacked his Jewish subjects; compelled the timid to receive the sacrament of baptism, and confiscated the effects of the obstinate. The Spanish clergy had not, however, so far forgotten the benevolent doctrines of the gospel, as to regard this circumstance with approbation, or even with indifference. They openly opposed the cruelty and folly of these severe proceedings: in their provincial council, they forbade the forcible imposition of the holy sacraments; but their superstition, and mistaken zeal for the honor of the church, permitted them not to liberate from this most cruel slavery those who had been partakers of the initiatory rite of Christianity, and who had been, though by the most unworthy means, enrolled against the professors of the gospel. They decreed, that those who had already been baptized should still be constrained to the external profession of the Christian religion.

The decrees of this council were probably mollified by the influence of the president, Isidore, bishop of Seville, who dared to condemn the mode of conversion prescribed by the Gothic monarch. The decree of the council of Toledo, in the year 633, was, however, less favorable to this persecuted people. A decree passed, that the children of the Jews should be forci-



bly taken away from their parents, and placed in monasteries, or in the hands of religious persons, where they might be instructed in the principles of Christianity. Towards the close of this century, a charge was exhibited against them, which afforded a pretext for additional severity: they were accused of treason against the state; and in the council of Toledo their possessions were confiscated; their persons condemned to perpetual slavery to the Christians, who were earnestly exhorted not to tolerate them in the exercise of their religion: and their children were doomed to be taken from them, at the age of seven years, to be educated in the Christian faith, and to be afterwards married to Christians.

The boundaries of Christianity were, in this century, still further expanded by the assuidity of the Nestorians in the east, and the zeal of several monks in the west. Missionaries from the monastic orders of Britain, Scotland, and Ireland, traveled into Germany, with the design of propagating or preserving the knowledge of Christianity. The Frieslanders were converted; and the Picts in England, together with the monarchs of the Saxon Heptarchy, acknowledged the truths of the gospel. But Christianity received, at an early period of this century, a most fatal blow from the doctrines and conquests of Mahomet, or Mahommed, the arch-impostor of the east. Descended from the most illustrious tribe of the Arabians, and from the most illustrious family of that tribe, Mahomet was, notwithstanding, reduced by the early death of his father to the poor inheritance of five camels and an Ethiopian maid-servant. In his twenty-fifth year he entered into the service of Cadijah, an opulent widow of Mecca, his native city. By selling her merchandise, in the countries of Syria, Egypt, and Palestine, Mahomet acquired a considerable part of that knowledge of the world which facilitated his imposture and his conquests: and at length the gratitude or affection of Cadijah restored him to the station of his ancestors, by bestowing upon him her hand and her fortune.

“According to the tradition of his companions,” says Mr. Gibbon, “Mahomet was distinguished by the beauty of his person, an outward gift, which is seldom despised, except by those to whom it has been refused. Before he spoke, the orator engaged on his side the affections of a public or private audience. They applauded his commanding presence, his majestic aspect, his piercing eye, his gracious smile, his flowing beard, his countenance that painted every sensation of the soul, and his gestures that enforced each expression of the tongue. In the familiar offices of life, he scrupulously adhered to the grave and ceremonious politeness of his country; his respectful atten-

tion to the rich and powerful was dignified by his condescension and affability to the poorest citizens of Mecca: the frankness of his manner concealed the artifice of his views; and the habits of courtesy were imputed to personal friendship, or universal benevolence. His memory was capacious and retentive, his wit easy and social, his imagination sublime, his judgment clear, rapid and decisive. With all these advantages, Mahomet was an illiterate barbarian; his youth had never been instructed in the arts of reading and writing; the common ignorance exempted him from shame or reproach, but he was reduced to a narrow circle of existence, and deprived of those faithful mirrors which reflect to our mind the minds of sages and heroes. Yet the volume of nature and of man was open to his view. When only thirteen years of age, he twice accompanied his uncle's caravan into Syria, to attend the fairs of Bostra and Damascus, but his duty obliged him to return home as soon as he had disposed of the merchandise with which he was intrusted. From his earliest youth, Mahomet was addicted to religious contemplation; and every year during the month Ramadan, he withdrew from the world and from the society of his wife, to the cave of Heva, three miles from Mecca, where he consulted the spirit of fraud or enthusiasm, and where he at length matured the faith which, under the name of ISLAM, he at length preached to his family and nation; a faith compounded of an eternal truth and a necessary fiction—"THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD, AND THAT MAHOMET IS HIS APOSTLE."

Such are the first principles of the religion of Mahomet which are illustrated and enlarged upon with numerous additional articles in the Koran, or, as it is sometimes termed, the Alcoran. The prophet of Mecca rejected the worship of idols and men, of stars and planets, on the rational principle, that whatever rises must set; that whatever is born must die; that whatever is corruptible must decay and perish. According to his own account, or the tradition of his disciples, "the substance of the Koran is uncreated and eternal; subsisting in the essence of the Deity, and inscribed with a pen of light on the table of his everlasting decrees." A paper copy in a volume of silk and gems was brought down to the lowest heaven by the angel Gabriel—who successively revealed the chapters and verses to the Arabian prophet. Instead of a perpetual and perfect measure of the divine will, the fragments of the Koran were produced at the discretion of Mahomet; each revelation is suited to the emergency of his policy or passion, and all contradiction is removed by the saving maxim, that any text of the Alkoran is abrogated or modified by any subsequent passage.



In the spirit of enthusiasm or of vanity, the prophet rests the truth of his mission on the merit of his book, audaciously challenges both men and angels to imitate the beauties of a single page, and presumes to assert that God alone could dictate this incomparable performance. Yet his loftiest strains must yield to the sublime simplicity of the book of Job, composed in a remote age in the same country and in the same language. The contents of the Koran were at first diligently recorded by his disciples on palm leaves and the shoulder bones of mutton; and the pages, without order or connexion, were cast into a chest in the custody of one of his wives. Two years after the death of Mahomet, the sacred volume was collected and published by his friend and successor Abubeker. At the end of two hundred years, the *Sonna* or oral law was fixed and consecrated by the labours of Al Boeheri, who distinguished seven thousand two hundred and seventy-five *genuine* traditions, from a mass of three hundred thousand reports of a more doubtful or spurious character!

According to the Koran, some rays of prophetic light, commencing with the fall of Adam, and extending in one unbroken chain of inspiration to the days of Mahomet, had been imparted to one hundred and twenty-four thousand of the elect, discriminated by their respective measures of virtue and grace—three hundred and thirteen apostles were sent with a special commission to recall their country from idolatry and vice—one hundred and four volumes had been dictated by the Holy Spirit, and six legislators of transcendant brightness have announced to mankind the six successive revelations of various rites, but of one immutable religion. The authority and station of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, and Mahomet, rise in gradation above each other; but whosoever hates or rejects *any one* of the prophets is numbered with the infidels. For the author of Christianity, the Mahometans are taught by the prophet to entertain a high and mysterious reverence. “Verily, Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, is the apostle of God, and his word, which he conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit proceeding from him, honorable in this world, and in the world to come; and one of those who approach near to the presence of God.” Yet, he teaches that Jesus was a mere mortal, and that at the day of judgment, his testimony will serve to condemn, both the Jews who reject him as a prophet, and the Christians, who adore him as the Son of God. The malice of his enemies, we are told, aspersed his reputation, and conspired against his life; but their intention only was guilty; a phantom, or a criminal, was substituted on the cross, and the innocent saint was translated to the seventh heaven.

During six hundred years, the gospel was the way of truth and salvation; but the Christians insensibly forgot both the laws and example of their founder; and Mahomet was instructed to accuse the church as well as the synagogue of corrupting the integrity of the sacred text. The piety of Moses and of Christ rejoiced in the assurance of the future prophet, more illustrious than themselves, and the promise of the "*the Comforter*," was prefigured in the name, and accomplished in the person of Mahomet, the greatest and last of the apostles of God.

The missions of the ancient prophets, of Moses and of Christ, had been confirmed by many splendid prodigies, and Mahomet was repeatedly urged by the inhabitant of Mecca and Medina, to produce a similar evidence of his divine mission; to call down from heaven the angel, or the volume of his revelation, to create a garden in the desert, or to kindle a conflagration in the unbelieving city. But as often as he is pressed upon this subject, he involves himself in the obscure boast of vision and prophecy, appeals to the internal proofs of his doctrine, and shields himself behind the providence of God, who refuses those signs and wonders that would depreciate the merit of faith, and aggravate the guilt of infidelity. But the very tone of his apologies betrays his weakness and vexation, while the numerous passages of scandal are more than sufficient to settle the question respecting the integrity of the Koran. The votaries of Mahomet are more confident than he himself was of his miraculous gifts; and their credulity increased as they were removed from the time and place of his exploits. They believe, or affirm, that trees went forth to meet him; that he was saluted by stones; that water gushed from his fingers, that he fed the hungry, cured the sick, and raised the dead; that a beam groaned to him; and that a camel complained to him; that a shoulder of mutton informed him of its being poisoned; and that both animate and inanimate nature were alike subject to this apostle of God. His dream of a nocturnal journey is seriously described as a real and corporeal transaction—a mysterious animal, the Borak, conveyed him from the temple of Mecca to that of Jerusalem; with his companion Gabriel, he successively ascended to the seven heavens, where he both received and repaid the salutations of the patriarchs, the prophets, and the angels, in their respective mansions. Beyond the seventh heaven, Mahomet alone was permitted to proceed; he passed the Veil of Unity, approached within two bow-shots of the throne; and felt a cold that pierced him to the heart, when his shoulder was touched by the hand of God. After a familiar though important conversation, he again descend-



ed to Jerusalem, remounted the Borak, returned to Mecca, and performed in the tenth part of a night, the journey of many thousand years. Such are the marvellous tales with which the vulgar are amused.

Prayer, fasting, and alms are the religious duties of a Mahometan; and he is encouraged to hope that prayer will carry him half way to God—fasting will bring him to the door of his palace—and alms will gain him admittance. During the month of Ramadan, from the rising to the setting of the sun, the Mussulman abstains from eating and drinking, and women, and baths, and perfumes; from all nourishment that can restore his strength; from all pleasure that can gratify his senses. In the revolution of the lunar year, the month Ramadan coincides by turns with the winter cold and with the summer heat; but the patient martyr, without assuaging his thirst with a drop of water, must wait for the close of a tedious and sultry day. The interdiction of wine is converted by Mahomet into a positive and general law; but these painful restraints are often infringed by the libertine, and eluded by the hypocrite.

The Koran acknowledges the doctrine of a resurrection from the dead and the future judgment. At the blast of the trumpet, new worlds will start into being; angels, genii, and men, will arise from the dead, the human soul will again be united to the body; and this will be succeeded by the final judgment of mankind. After the greater part of mankind have been condemned for their opinions, the true believers only will be judged by their actions. The good and evil of each Mussulman will be weighed in a balance, and a singular mode of compensation will be allowed for the payment of injuries; the aggressor will refund an equivalent of good actions, for the benefit of the person he has wronged, and if he should be destitute of any moral property, the weight of his sins will be loaded with an adequate share of the demerits of the sufferer. According as the shares of guilt or virtue shall preponderate, the sentence will be pronounced, and all, without distinction, will pass over the sharp and perilous bridge of the abyss; but the innocent, treading in the footsteps of Mahomet, will gloriously enter the gates of Paradise, while the guilty will fall into the first and mildest of the seven hells. The term of expiation will vary from nine hundred to seven thousand years; but the prophet has judiciously promised that *all* his disciples, whatever may be their sins, shall be saved, by their own faith and his intercession, from eternal damnation.

It is natural enough that an Arabian prophet should dwell with rapture on the groves, the fountains, and the rivers of Paradise; but instead of inspiring the blessed inhabitants with

a liberal taste for harmony and science, conversation and friendship, he idly celebrates the pearls and diamonds, the robes of silk, palaces of marble, dishes of gold, rich wines, artificial dainties, numerous attendants, and the whole train of sensual and costly luxury, which become insipid to the owner, even in the short period of this mortal life. Seventy-two *Houris*, or black-eyed damsels, of resplendent beauty, blooming youth, virgin purity, and exquisite sensibility, will be created for the use of the meanest believer; a moment of pleasure will be prolonged to a thousand years, and his faculties will be increased a hundredfold to render him worthy of his felicity.

Such are the outlines of the religion of Mahomet, which he began to preach at Mecca, in the year 609. His first converts were his wife, his servant, his pupil, and his friend. In process of time, ten of the most respectable citizens of Mecca were introduced to the private lessons of the prophet; they yielded to the voice of enthusiasm and repeated the fundamental creed,—“There is but one God, and Mahomet is his apostle.” Their faith, even in this life, was rewarded with riches and honors, with the command of armies and the government of kingdoms! Three years were silently employed in the conversion of fourteen proselytes, the first fruits of his mission. But in the fourth he assumed the prophetic office, and resolving to impart to his family the benefits of his religion, he prepared a banquet for the entertainment of forty guests of the race of Hashem. “Friends and kinsmen,” said Mahomet to the assembly, “I offer you, and I alone can offer, the most precious of gifts, the treasures of this world and of the world to come. God has commanded me to call you to his service. Who among you will support my burthen? Who among you will be my companion and my vizir?” No answer was returned, till the silence of astonishment, and doubt, and contempt, was at length broken by the impatient courage of Ali, a youth in the fourteenth year of his age. “O prophet, I am the man; whosoever rises against thee, I will dash out his teeth, tear out his eyes, break his legs, rip up his belly. O prophet, I will be thy vizir over them.” Mahomet accepted his offer with transport. His uncle Abu-Taleb, advised the prophet to relinquish his impracticable design. “Spare your remonstrances,” replied the fanatic, to his uncle and benefactor, “if they should place the sun on my right-hand and the moon on my left, they should not divert me from my course. “He persevered ten years in the exercise of his mission, during which time the religion that has since overspread the East and the West advanced with a slow and painful progress within the walls of Mecca.

In his uncle Abu-Taleb, though no believer in his mission,



the impostor found a guardian of his fame and person, during the life of that venerable chief; but at his death, which took place in the year 622. Mahomet was abandoned to the power of his enemies, and that too at the moment when he was deprived of his domestic comforts by the loss of his faithful and generous wife Cadijah. The tribe of the Koreishites and their allies were, of all the citizens of Mecca, the most hostile to his pretensions. His death was resolved upon, and it was agreed that a sword from each tribe should be buried in his heart, to divide the guilt of his blood, and to baffle the vengeance of his disciples. An angel or a spy revealed their conspiracy, and flight was the only resource of Mahomet. At the dead of night, accompanied by his friend Abubeker, he silently escaped from his house—three days they were concealed in the cave of Thor, three miles from Mecca, and in the close of each evening they received from the son and daughter of Abubeker a supply of intelligence and food. The most diligent search was made after him; every haunt in the neighbourhood was explored; his adversaries even arrived at the entrance of the cave, but the sight of a spider's web and a pigeon's nest are supposed to have convinced them that the place was solitary and inviolate. "We are only two," said the trembling Abubeker. "There is a third," replied the prophet, "it is God himself." No sooner was the pursuit abated, than the two fugitives issued from the den, and mounted their camels: on the road to Medina they were overtaken by the emissaries of the Koreish; but they redeemed themselves with prayers and promises from their hands. In this eventful moment the lance of an Arab might have changed the history of the world.

The religion of the Koran might have perished in its cradle, had not Medina embraced with faith and reverence the outcasts of Mecca. But some of its noblest citizens were converted by the preaching of Mahomet. Seventy-three men and two women of Medina held a solemn conference with Mahomet, his kinsman, and his disciples, and pledged themselves to each other by a mutual oath of fidelity. They promised, in the name of the city, that if he should be banished, they would receive him as a confederate, obey him as a leader, and defend him to the last extremity. "But if you are recalled to your country," said they, "will you not abandon your new allies?" "All things," replied Mahomet, "are now common between us; your blood is my blood; your ruin is my ruin. We are bound to each other by the ties of honor and interest. I am your friend and the enemy of your foes." "But if we are killed in your service," said they, "what will be our reward?" "PARA-

dise," replied the prophet. "Stretch forth thy hand." He stretched it forth, and they reiterated the oath of allegiance and fidelity.

From his establishment at Medina, Mahomet assumed the exercise of the regal and sacerdotal office. On a chosen spot of ground he built a house and a mosque, venerable for their rude simplicity. When he prayed and preached in the weekly assembly, he leaned against the trunk of a palm tree; and it was long before he indulged himself in the use of a chair or pulpit. After a reign of six years, fifteen hundred of his followers, in arms, and in the field, renewed their oath of allegiance, and their chief repeated the assurance of his protection.

From this time Mahomet became a martial apostle—he fought in person at nine battles or sieges, and fifty enterprises of war were achieved in ten years by himself or his lieutenants. He continued to unite the professions of a merchant and a robber, and his petty excursions for the defence or the attack of a caravan insensibly prepared his troops for the conquest of Arabia. The distribution of the spoil was regulated by the law of the prophet: the whole was collected in one common mass; a fifth of the gold and silver, the cattle, prisoners, &c., was reserved for pious and charitable uses; the remainder was shared in adequate portions by the soldiers. From all sides the roving Arabs were allured to the standard of *religion* and *plunder*; the apostle sanctified the license of embracing the female captives as their wives or concubines, and the enjoyment of wealth and beauty was the type of their promised paradise. "The sword," says Mahomet, "is the key of heaven and hell: a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting and prayer; whoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven; at the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermillion, and odoriferous as musk; and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubim."

Till the age of sixty-three, the strength of Mahomet was equal to the fatigues of his station. He had by that time, made an entire conquest of Arabia, and evinced a disposition to turn his arms against the Roman empire; but his followers were discouraged. They alleged the want of money, or horses, or provisions; the season of harvest and the intolerable heat of the summer. "Hell is much hotter," said the indignant prophet; but he disdained to compel their service. He was then at the head of ten thousand horse and twenty thousand foot, in the way that leads from Medina to Damascus, intent upon the conquest of Syria, when he was stopped short in his career, hav-



ing been poisoned, as he himself seriously believed, at Chaibar, by the revenge of a Jewish female. Its fatal effects, however, was not immediate, for during four years the health of Mahomet declined; his infirmities increased, and he was at last carried off by a fever of fourteen days continuance, which, at intervals, deprived him of the use of his reason, and he died in the year 632. His death occasioned the utmost consternation among his followers. The city of Medina, and especially the house of the prophet, was a scene of clamorous sorrow, or of silent despair. "How can he be dead," exclaimed his deluded votaries, "our witness, our intercessor, our mediator with God. He is not dead. Like Moses and Jesus he is wrapt in a holy trance, and speedily will he return to his faithful people." The evidence of sense was disregarded, and Omar, unsheathing his 'cimeter, threatened to strike off the heads of the infidels who should dare to affirm that the prophet was no more. But the tumult was appeased by the weight and moderation of Abubeker. "Is it Mahomet," said he to Omar and the multitude, "or the God of Mahomet whom you worship? The God of Mahomet liveth for ever, but the apostle was a mortal like ourselves, and according to his own prediction, he has experienced the common fate of mortality." He was piously interred by the hands of his nearest kinsman, on the spot on which he expired. Medina has been rendered famous by the death and burial of Mahomet, and the innumerable pilgrims of Mecca often turn aside from the way, to bow in voluntary devotion before the simple tomb of the prophet.

Having thus briefly glanced at the rise of Mahometanism, we return to the History of the Church. The Christians who were averse to this faith, suffered incredible hardships; and devastation and bloodshed marked the footsteps of the professors of the faith of Islam. In the victorious progress of Amrou, a Saracen general, Egypt was the fruit of his conquests; and a circumstance which arose after the capture of Alexandria is strongly expressive of the character of the first caliphs. Amrou had, in his leisure hours, amused and improved himself by the conversation of *John Philoponus*, a celebrated grammarian of that city, and a private scholar. Philoponus earnestly besought his patron to gratify him with the present of the Alexandrian library; but the request of a favorite was not sufficient to make the victorious general forgetful of the obedience which was due to the caliph. The request was therefore preferred to Omar, who replied with the spirit of a fanatic, "If these writings of the Greeks agree with the book of God, they are useless, and deserve not to be preserved; if they disagree, they are pernicious, and ought to be destroyed." The sentence was

executed with blind obedience; and such was the incredible number of the volumes, that, during six months, they supplied fuel for the baths, which contributed to the health and convenience of the populous capital of Egypt.

The heretical opinions of those who had asserted, that Jesus Christ was possessed of only one will and one operation, proved so much more obnoxious to the members of the church, convened at the third general council of Constantinople, than the increasing immoralities of the clergy, that the synod was dismissed, if not without any person adverting to the necessity of discipline, at least, without having enacting a solitary canon for the regulation of clerical conduct.

The enormities which were, however, committed, demanded instant regulation; and several provincial conventions attempted to remedy the disorders, which threatened the dissolution of Christianity itself. Almost every crime which disgraces humanity entered into the dark catalogue of clerical vices, which were augmented by the arrogance and cruelty of their conduct towards the inferior clergy. The council of Prague, in the year 675, passed a public censure upon those of the superior clergy, who whipped, as slaves, the inferior ministers of the church; or who compelled their deacons to perform the menial office of carrying the bishop upon their shoulders. The authority exercised by the clergy extended as well to the superior as to the inferior classes of mankind; and the twelfth council of Toledo, in the year 681, presumed to release the subjects of Wamba from their allegiance to their sovereign. In vain did the deposed monarch endeavor to regain his kingdom, by the plea that the habit of a monk, with which he had been invested, had been put upon him, under the pretence of his being a penitent, at a time when his disorder had rendered him insensible. But the two characters of a monk and a king were deemed incompatible by his haughty and arrogant judges. Ervige was declared to have a lawful claim to the allegiance of the people; and the unfortunate Wamba was prohibited from the exercise of temporal jurisdiction, which was not adapted to the situation of a king who was condemned to perform penance.

At a time when the manners of the ecclesiastics were so extremely corrupt, we can scarcely be surprised at any instance of atrocity. The Romish see was a prize worthy of the utmost ambition and avarice, and it was eagerly aspired after by various contenders. The intrigues of Peter and Theodore for the pontificate had scarcely ceased, by the appointment of Conon to that see, when the early death of the Romish patriarch afforded a new opportunity for contention between Theodore (who seized



upon the Lateran palace) and Paschal. Each contender being elected by his own party, the magistracy and the people were obliged to interfere; in consequence of which, the election of Sergius to the unoccupied see destroyed the pretensions of the two competitors. The submission of Théodore soon followed; but his rival, the archdeacon Paschal, was with great difficulty compelled to resign his pretension. An accusation of magic was, however, soon preferred against the turbulent priest, who was, in consequence of the charge, deposed from his station in the church, and condemned to spend the remainder of his life in a monastery, forgotten, or remembered with abhorrence, by a credulous and superstitious people.

The patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, which had already suffered repeated defalcations of power, were during this century abolished, by the conquests of the victorious Saracens. Nominal bishops\* were indeed appointed to those sees, which had been subjected to the power of the Mussulmans: but toleration was not the virtue of the followers of Mahomet; and, however the Arabian caliphs might be disposed to favor those sects by whom their conquests had been originally advanced, the orthodox Christians were severely oppressed, and the prelates strictly prohibited from the exercise of the episcopal function in their dioceses.

In order to supply the omissions of the sixth general council, and to provide a remedy for the disorders of the clergy, another council was convened at Constantinople, by the emperor Justinian II. in the year 692. This convention obtained the name of the *Quinisext Council*, from its being considered as a supplement to the two last general conventions; and the *Council in Trulla*, from the synod being assembled in a chamber of the imperial palace, which was covered with a dome or cupola, and called *Trulla*. This council, amongst various regulations respecting discipline, was so favorable to the marriages of the clergy, as to decree that the separation of those of the clerical order, who were already married, from their wives, was contrary to the command of Christ. It condemned the Saturday's fast, prohibited the representation of Christ under the symbol of a lamb, and raised the Byzantine Patriarch to a rank equal with that of the pontiff of Rome. Several of the western churches refused to consider as valid the acts of a synod, which, while it confirmed the faith established by former councils, so strongly militated against their opinions and practices; and the *Quinisext council* has been branded, by the zeal of the Romish adherents, with the names of *an illegitimate council, a false synod, a conven-*

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\* Called Bishops *in partibus infidelium*.

*tion of malignants, and a diabolical council,* Its canons have, however, been always acknowledged and observed by the Greek church.

The doctrines of religion underwent few alterations in this century; its superstitions were, however, generally received, and their authority confirmed by the sanction and approbation of the multitude. The different fathers of the western churches vied with each other in the invention of new superstitions; and appear to have believed, that, in order to distinguish themselves as the champions of the church, it was necessary to refuse the aid of truth and reason in support of her cause. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which in the first ages of the church had been received with the utmost plainness and simplicity, was now accompanied by various superstitious observances prescribed by the authority of councils. The council of Toledo, in the year 646, prohibited its being received after having eaten the smallest particle of food; and that of Trulla confirmed this decree, with the addition of a command to the receiver to take it stretching out his hands in the form of a cross. The superstitious opinions respecting the sacrament extended to the eucharistical wine, which, when mixed with ink, rendered the contract with which it was signed peculiarly sacred. The element, the type of that blood which was shed for the happiness of mankind, was made a vehicle for conveying the bitterest rancor and uncharitableness. When Theodore, the Roman pontiff deposed and anathematized Pyrrhus, the Monothelite (who, to conciliate his favor, had publicly abjured his errors, but afterwards, upon finding that the protection of that pope was rather an impediment to his restoration to the Byzantine see, from which he had been deposed, retracted what he had abjured,) the haughty bishop, calling for the sacred chalice, dipped his envenomed pen in the consecrated wine, and then subscribed his condemnation, which was attended with every superstitious ceremony that could fill the mind with terror and dismay.

The superstitions which increased the power and authority of the clerical order, were at the same time fruitful sources of wealth. The doctrine of the efficacy of masses repeated by ecclesiastics was strenuously urged; and such was their supposed virtue, that they were thought capable of alleviating not only the pains, and refreshing the weariness of the sick, but of procuring the captive a temporary release from his bonds. The doctrine of pilgrimage afforded a profit not less considerable: such indeed were the benefits accruing from the visits of devout pilgrims to the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul, that the Romish missionaries exerted every art of persuasion to induce their proselytes to avail themselves of a practice which so materially



lessened the difficulties they must encounter in the paths of salvation. The people, the priest, and the monarch were equally infected by the most desperate superstition. When Heraclius had ravaged the Persian dominions, he opened the book of the gospels, in order to be determined, by the first sentence which caught his eye, upon the choice of his winter quarters. Interest, however, which is a stronger principle than superstition, in the minds of most men, sometimes opposed its dictates. When, upon the return of Constantine Pogonatus from Sicily, a party of his subjects would have persuaded him to adopt his two brothers as partners in the empire, in imitation the sacred Trinity, the emperor was not sufficiently accessible to such a reason, to agree to the request. He put to death the projectors of a scheme so absurd; and commanded the noses of his unfortunate brothers to be taken off, which occasioned a deformity that amounted to a perpetual exclusion of the unhappy sufferers from any share in the administration of the imperial affairs.

The progress of monastic power has been traced through the preceding centuries. Arising from an obscure original, its claims and its accessions, though great, were gradual; but though slow, were effectual. The privileges of the monastic orders were considerably extended in the council, said to have been convened by Gregory the Great, in which the monks were permitted to elect their abbot either from their own society or that of any other monastery; and the bishops were prohibited from taking a monk from his cell, in order to introduce him into the clerical order, without the consent of his superior; and from interfering with the revenues of the monastery. Their power was completely established in the year 606, by Boniface IV. whose attachment to the monastic state was such, as to induce him to convert his house at Rome into a monastery. This prelate granted to the monks authority to preach, to baptise, to hear confession, and to absolve, and in fine to perform every clerical function. These regulations, which released the monks from their former allegiance to the bishops, occasioned, by the gratitude of that body, a considerable accession of power to the Roman see: and, by collecting into one channel the streams which had been extensively dispersed, made the difference between the powers of the Roman pontiff and the other bishops still more excessive.

The simple expressions which had been deemed sufficient, in the first ages of the church, for declaring the assent of its members to the truths of Christianity, received considerable additions from the zealous attention of the fathers of the church, to guard against the admission of heretics. In the fourth council

of Toledo, in the year 633, the leaders of the Spanish churches asserted their belief, that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son. This opinion had been long maintained among the Greeks, and during this age was introduced into the west: but it was not till the ninth century that it was generally received in the Latin church: when the word *Folioque*, expressing the possession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, was added to the creed.

Festivals on various occasions were added to the Christian rites during this century, amongst which the Virgin Mary appears to have been particularly distinguished. The feast of her Annunciation was instituted, in the council of Constantinople, in the year 692; the remembrance of her death was commanded to be observed, and was denominated the Deposition of the Virgin; and the feast of her Nativity was established towards the close of this century. Few of the saints had indeed been forgotten in the distribution of celestial honors: but Boniface IV. obtained a grant of the Pantheon at Rome, and, in order that no one might be neglected, he piously dedicated it to all the saints. The edifice, therefore, which among the pagans had served as a memorial of all the gods, was consecrated by the Christians to the remembrance of all their saints, and a festival to their honor was instituted in the succeeding century;

The rights of sanctuary, as we have already seen, were admitted at an early period into the Christian Church; and they were soon very liberally claimed by those who had violated the peace of society, and refused to submit to its laws. Imperial edicts and clerical decrees were repeatedly issued to restrain the privileges of asylum to the perpetrators of lesser crimes, whilst those who had committed grosser offences were commanded to be surrendered up to justice. Under the pontificate of Boniface V. the licentious and profligate obtained further immunities by one of his decrees, which ordained, that, whatever the offence of the criminal, none should dare take him forcibly from his sanctuary in the church. This political measure, while it promoted a general spirit of depravity, became a considerable accession to the power and aggrandizement of the church. It at length indeed extended almost to the annihilation of the civil authority, and demanded the exertions of the sovereigns of Europe to restrain it within decent limits.

The observance of public penance, an institution admirably calculated for the preservation of good order in the church, had, as has been already stated, considerably declined. But the necessity and advantage of private confession and penance was earnestly inculcated by several of the fathers of the church; and



particularly by Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, who for some time fully established this regulation in his church. Penitentiary discipline received considerable alterations and improvements from this prelate, who, from the canons of the Greek and Latin churches, published a Penitential Office, which distinguished the degrees of atrocity in different sins, according to their nature and consequences, and appointed the penalties suitable to the various degrees of transgression. From England this book extended throughout the west; and became the model of various publications, similar in their nature, but in the execution far inferior.

The history of the Monothelites was so closely interwoven with the general transactions of the seventh century, that little more can be necessary to be added concerning them. The orthodox belief, that Jesus Christ was possessed of the wills and operations peculiar both to his divinity and humanity, was first opposed by Theodore, bishop of Pharon, who contended that the humanity was so united to the divinity, that, although it fully possessed its own faculties, yet its operation must be ascribed to the divinity. Cyrus, bishop of Phasis, adopted the opinions of Theodore; and the sect of which they were the leaders were termed Monothelites, from their affirming that the two natures in Christ were so constituted, that he possessed only one will and one operation, which they termed Theandric. Protected and nurtured by imperial approbation, the Monothelites became a very considerable sect. The decisions of the sixth general council at Constantinople, determined that their opinions were not consistent with the purity of the Christian faith; the Monothelites were formally condemned; and, though sometimes the objects of royal favor, were in general contemned and depressed. Thus persecuted, they retired to the neighbourhood of Mount Libanus, but in the twelfth century abjured their schismatical opinions, and were admitted into communion with the Romish church. Our concern for the difficulties they sustained after their condemnation, cannot but be lessened by a consideration of the cruelties which in the day of their power they were tempted to commit against their orthodox brethren. The Abyssinian church appears still to have retained the opinions of the Monothelites; and has continued to disown the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, and the greater part of the doctrines of the Romish church.

In an age of gross ignorance, and in which the spirit of inquiry was checked by ecclesiastical censures and imperial laws, few deviations from established opinions were likely to arise. The greater part of the sects of this period were indeed of small importance and short duration. Amongst the principal

of them were the Aginians, who condemned matrimony, and the use of certain meats; the Chazinarians, who were adorers of the cross; the Gnosimachi, who opposed the tenets of Gnosticism; the Ercetæ, who affirmed that, in order to render prayer acceptable to God, it should be performed dancing; and the Lampetians, who asserted that man ought to perform no action against his free agency, whence all vows were undoubtedly unlawful; in all other respects this sect professed the doctrines of Arianism.

Whether we contemplate the importance, the duration, or the effects which they are believed to have produced, the Paulicians are undoubtedly the most considerable sect of the seventh century. According to the opinions of some celebrated writers, this sect derived its appellation from the attachment of its professors to the Apostle Paul. Their teachers represented the four disciples of the apostle of the Gentiles: the names of the apostolic churches were applied to the congregations which they assembled; and the Epistles of Paul, together with the Gospels, were carefully investigated by the Paulicians, who contended that in these books was contained every article of primitive Christianity. They openly rejected the validity of the Old Testament, and the Epistles of St. Peter: they disclaimed the visions which had been published by the oriental sects; condemned the doctrines of Manes, and complained of the injustice of being considered as his followers. Every object of superstition was despised and abhorred by these primitive reformers. Yet their doctrines were not exempted from absurdity: instead of confessing the human nature and substantial sufferings of Christ, they amused their fancy with a celestial body, which passed through the Virgin, like water through a pipe; and with a fantastic crucifixion, that eluded the impotent malice of the Jews. Their unphilosophical creed extended also to the eternity of matter.

The teachers of this sect were only distinguished by their scriptural names, by their zeal or knowledge, and by the austerity and simplicity of their lives. Their disciples were considerably multiplied, not only in Armenia, their original station, but in Pontus and Cappadocia. They were however soon involved in the horrors of persecution; and during the period of one hundred and fifty years their patience sustained whatever evils misguided zeal could inflict. Michael I. and Leo the Armenian were foremost in the race of persecution; but the prize was obtained by the empress Theodora, who restored the images to the oriental churches, and under whose reign one hundred thousand Paulicians (under which odious name it is probable several Iconoclasts were included) were extirpated. In



conjunction with the Saracens, this persecuted sect resisted in arms the intolerant emperors of the east; and the son of Theodora fled before the heretics whom his mother had condemned to the flames. The insurgents penetrated into the heart of Asia, repeatedly overthrew the imperial troops; and for more than a century the Paulicians continued to defend their religion and liberty.

Inflexible in their opinions, and unconquerable either by imperial arms or arguments, the Paulicians continued to dissent both from the Greek and Latin churches. In the beginning of the thirteenth century, their primate resided on the confines of Bulgaria, Croatia, and Dalmatia, and governed by his vicars the filial congregations of Italy and France. At the close of the seventeenth century, the sect still inhabited the vallies of Mount Hæmus, tormented by the Greek clergy, and greatly corrupted in their religious tenets. In the west, if indeed they penetrated into the west, the favor and success of the Paulicians must be imputed to the powerful though secret discontent, which animated the most pious Christians against the church of Rome. They are conceived by some to be the leaders of the venerable band who settled in the country of the Albigeois, in the southern provinces of France, who purified their creed from all the visions of the Gnostic theology, and became the intrepid opposers of every superstition and usurpation of the church, and the glorious leaders of the reformation.

From the increasing ignorance of that body of men, to whom literature, in the ages which preceded and which succeeded this period of barbarism, has been indebted for the most important services, it may naturally be inferred that the cause of learning must necessarily decline; and that, amongst a people immersed in superstition and ignorance, few good writers would be found. Few indeed were they in number, and small and confined were the labors of that few. True philosophy, which had gradually receded, now disappeared, and scarcely left a trace by which her footsteps upon earth could be discerned. Logical distinctions and subtle sophisms usurped her place, and were applied to the investigation of every difficult point, which, if they found not already sufficiently obscure, they enveloped in a cloud, into which the most discerning eye could scarcely pervade.

The taste for investigating difficult theological questions was much more prevalent amongst the Greeks than the Latins; and we consequently find many more controversial writers in the eastern empire. Timotheus, in a work concerning the reception of heretics, attacked the various heresies which divided the

church. Particular errors in doctrine were assailed by various writers. The Monothelites by Maximus, and his disciple Anastasius. Paganism was assaulted by Philoponus, the grammarian, of Alexandria, and chief of the sect of the Tritheists, in a discourse concerning idols, which was intended to refute the assertions of the philosopher Jamblichus; but his zeal against paganism was not sufficient to screen him from the imputation of maintaining heretical opinions himself. Conon and Eusebius, his two disciples, attacked his opinion of the three natures in God: and Nicias, who had exerted his abilities against the enemies of Christianity, refuted several of the erroneous opinions of Philoponus; and composed a discourse against the heretic Severus, one of the leaders of the sect of the Corrupticolæ. Julian Pomerius, who had attempted, but unsuccessfully, the explanation of some difficult passages in the sacred writings, obtained some applause by his arguments against the Jews.

Very few of the writers of this century attempted to elucidate and explain the Holy Scriptures. Collections were indeed made from the writings of former ages, and particularly from those of Augustin and Gregory the Great. Thomas, bishop of Heraclea, composed a second Syriac version of all the books of the New Testament. Paterius published an Exposition both of the old Testament and the new. Hesychius, priest of Jerusalem, wrote some commentaries upon the Book of Leviticus, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. The zealous Maximus, whose labors in the church were not confined to the discussion of any one matter respecting religion, published a solution of several Questions relating to the sacred Scriptures. But it is not amongst the writers of this century that we are to expect either sound argument or clear expression. Isidore, bishop of Seville, composed some Commentaries upon the Holy Scriptures, and wrote an Abridgment of the arts and sciences; some Treatises of Grammar and Philosophy; several Moral Discourses, and other literary works. This illustrious prelate, who derived his origin from Theodoric, king of Italy, presided near forty years over the church of Seville; and was one of the few characters of the seventh century, who did not conceive the knowledge of human learning to be incompatible with the practice of religion.

If, in contemplating the annals of this period, we are compelled to observe the gross deviations from rectitude in the conduct of mankind; a perusal of the moral writers of this century will convince us, that, if the science of ethics was not practised, it was scarcely understood. Superstition had sapped the foundations of moral knowledge; and the venerable fabric, instead of being supported by those whose interest and duty were concerned in its preservation, was in several places secretly



undermined, and its ruin nearly completed, by the practice of those fanatical vagaries, which were esteemed a full compensation for the neglect of the great duties of life. A Pandect of the Holy Scriptures, upon the duties of Christians, was published by Antiochus, a monk of Palestine. The mystical morality of Maximus, that of Hesychius, and of the few other moral writers of this century, was little calculated to promote the interests of genuine virtue.

The historical writers of this period are not entitled to a very exalted eulogium. The lives of the saints, a favorite species of composition in this superstitious age, were degraded by absurdity, and an endless train of wonders and miracles. Leontius, bishop of Cyprus, composed the Memoirs of John the Almoner, bishop of Alexandria, whose virtues were entitled to the affection and applause of his contemporaries. George, the successor of John in the Alexandrian see, wrote a life of Chrysostom, which is unhappily distinguished only by its falsehood. It yields however in absurdity, to *The Spiritual Meadow* of John Moschus, a priest and monk, which contains a relation of the actions and miracles of the hermits of different countries; and details not only the contests which were endured by those holy men with the world and the flesh, but their conversations with evil spirits, their conflicts with demons, and their victories over whole legions of the powers of darkness.

The celebrated Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, has been already noticed. This eminent ecclesiastic was a native of Tarsus, in Cilicia, and was appointed by the pontiff Vitalianus to the see of Canterbury; but was obliged to defer his consecration for three months after his arrival in England, on account of his head being shaven in the manner of the eastern monks. The Romish see acquired a powerful advocate in Theodore, who adopted the rites and ceremonies of that church; and extended the jurisdiction of the see of Canterbury, by the concurrence of the Saxon kings, over all England. Before his death, he had the additional satisfaction of seeing the Scottish church united to the Roman see, adopting all her ceremonies, and acknowledging the authority of his own metropolitan church. His Penitentiary is the only celebrated part of his literary labors.

The writers on theological subjects were little, if at all, superior to their contemporaries in the other branches of literature. A body of divinity, extracted from the works of Gregory and Augustin, was composed by Tayon, bishop of Saragossa; and the doctrines of theology, derived from the same source, were brought together by several other writers, in a similar manner. The best epitome of divinity, collected in this century,

was that by Ildefonsus, bishop of Toledo, a prelate distinguished for his erudition and abilities; who composed, besides his Sermons, a work upon the ecclesiastical Writers, and some Letters. Maximus, a warm and vehement opponent of the Monothelites, who had tinged his pen with the gall of controversy, and was a commentator, and a writer of morality, drew up also, though by no means in a masterly style, a work concerning the nature of Theology. This monk, whose active and vindictive temper suffered him not to remain an idle spectator of the controversial affairs of this period, and whose talents raised him to the highest station amongst the Greek authors of this century, was descended from a noble family at Constantinople, where he enjoyed the post of secretary of state to the emperor Heraclius. Hence he retired to the monastery of Chrysopolis, of which he became the abbot; but the apprehensions of the incursions of the barbarians, and the erroneous opinions propagated at Constantinople, compelled him to retire into the west; and he settled in Africa. Internal tranquility was not, however, his object in his retreat. He fulminated his denunciations against the heresy of the Monothelites; and excited the African bishops, and the pontiff of Rome, to declare their detestation of those heretics, and of the Type of the emperor Constans. Maximus was followed in his retreat by the Monothelite Pyrrhus, who had been compelled by Constans to abandon the Byzantine see. Here the angry combatants again entered the lists of controversy; and the opinions of one will, or of two wills, in Christ, were espoused by the numerous respective adherents. The African bishops, alarmed at a contention which disturbed the tranquility of their church, applied to the governor to summon Pyrrhus and his opponent to a public discussion of their opinions. They met in the presence of the governor, the bishops, and the assembled nobility. Each of the contending parties offered his reasons; and every sophism, every subtlety, that ingenuity could devise, were exerted in the debate; at the close of which, the politic Pyrrhus, who required the protection of the bishop of Rome, affected to be converted by the arguments of his opponent; and, though he afterwards retracted his confession, abjured, first in Africa, and afterwards at Rome, the heretical doctrine of one will. The attempt of the Byzantine monk to oppose the celebrated decree of Constans was not, however, equally successful. He was forcibly conveyed back to Constantinople, by the commands of the emperor; whence he was banished to Byzica, a small village in Thrace. Again he was recalled to the imperial court: but banishment had not subdued his spirit; and again his contumacy, or his zeal for the truth, was punished by his being publicly scourged through the twelve districts of the city, and



by the cruel deprivation of his tongue and his right hand. His disciple, Anastasius participated in the guilt and the sufferings of his friend. Thus mutilated, the unhappy Maximus was not permitted the sad privilege of undisturbed sorrow; he was imprisoned in a strong castle, where he closed a life spent in the most active exertions, in what he probably considered as the cause of the church.

The praises of the Virgin employed the rhetorical powers of John, the monk, who wrote several Sermons to her honor. Adhelm, abbot of Malmsbury, composed several treatises upon her Virginity, both in prose and verse; and George Pisides has in his Sermons celebrated the virtues of the Virgin in lofty strains.

## CHAPTER IX.

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### THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—OF GOVERNMENT, DOCTRINE, RITES, AND CEREMONIES, IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY.—OF THE SECTS WHICH APPEARED IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY.—OF LEARNING AND LEARNED MEN IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

THE interference of the emperors in matters of religion had, as was formerly observed, occasioned violent commotions in the empire and the church. Under Justinian II. who reigned at the beginning of this century, they were not designed to experience greater tranquility from the profligacy and wickedness of the emperor, than they had formerly derived from the absurd attempts of his predecessors to compose religious differences. Justinian was, both in principle and practice, inimical to virtue, and consequently to the happiness of his subjects; and, without intermeddling in theological disputes, he contrived to harass and distress the church. The destruction of buildings dedicated to religion will always, in some degree, be repugnant to the feelings of a virtuous mind; and, in a superstitious age, the demolition of a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, for the erection of a banqueting-house, was an offence which was calculated to excite the most violent detestation against the emperor. Nor was this the only instance in which he consulted the gratification of his passions at the expense of the clergy. In revenge for his attachment to his rival Leontius, he commanded the eyes of the patriarch Callinicius to be put out; and, in addition to this inhuman punishment, banished the unhappy patriarch to Rome, where he had the mortification of depending, for a precarious subsistence, upon the Roman pontiff, whose authority he had always opposed and contemned.

Philippicus, his successor, resumed the imperial exertions for the extinction of erroneous opinions. The heterodox cause of



Monothelism reared her dejected head under this emperor, who was a zealous adherent to the opinions of that sect; and whose example and influence promoted their interest amongst persons of the most exalted rank and dignity. His zeal for Monothelism was demonstrated by every insult which could be shown to whatever had opposed the establishment of his favorite opinion. He convened a synod, which was easily induced to condemn the sixth general council; and the picture of this assembly, which had reprobated his darling prejudices, was indignantly torn from the walls of the great church of St. Sophia, and demolished, by the command of the emperor, and the consent of the obsequious patriarch. This measure, the first that was adopted in a contest which rent asunder the peace of the church during the remainder of this century, was followed by an order, transmitted to the Roman pontiff, for the demolition of all pictures or images which adorned the walls of the churches. But the haughty Constantine received not these commands with submission, nor consented to obey them. He opposed, by a formal protest, the imperial edict; and demonstrated his contempt of the order, by immediately placing pictures of the sixth general council against the walls of St. Peter's church: and, in a synod which he convened at Rome, he not only condemned the conduct of Philippicus, in this instance, but excommunicated him as a heretic; pronounced him unworthy of the empire, and authorized and exhorted his subjects to revolt. Whoever regards the measures taken by either party, as altogether the effect of religious principle, will probably be mistaken. Philippicus might have suffered the offending picture to decorate the walls of the great church, had it not perpetuated and aggravated the remembrance of a council, which had anathematized opinions that had met with his approbation; and Constantine would perhaps have submitted to the edict of the emperor, had he not wished for an opportunity of discarding the authority of the Byzantine court, and asserting the independence of the Roman see.

This punishment, which was justly incurred by his contumelious and arrogant behavior of the Roman pontiff, was prevented by the violent and sudden death of Philippicus. His successor, Anastasius, a man of learning, and a zealous catholic, was little disposed to resent the indignities offered by the Roman pontiff. In the short period of his reign, he endeavored to repair the breaches which had been made in the peace of the church; but he was soon compelled to resign the imperial diadem; and assumed the habit of a monk, in order to preserve his life.

Leo, the Isaurian, who was invested with the purple in the

year 716, had been gradually raised from the station of a private soldier in the guards of Justinian. He was crowned by the patriarch Germanus; and engaged, by a solemn oath, to defend and preserve the orthodox cause, and to continue a decided enemy to Monothelism. His zeal in the cause of Christianity was indeed manifested at an early period of his reign. In 721, a Syrian impostor had seduced the Jews, on the pretence of being their expected Messiah, and had occasioned several disturbances. Leo, through a mistaken zeal to advance the truths of religion, enacted a law against the Jews, compelling them to receive baptism, and to conform to the religion of the empire. Under this emperor, the contests concerning image worship, which had for some time lain dormant, were again revived; measures against the prevalence of this pernicious superstition were conceived, and executed with resolution and intrepidity; and sharp and continued tumults agitated the whole Christian world. Synods clashed against synods; the miraculous efficacy of those painted pageants was insisted upon; the saints declared the justice of their cause by signs and portents; and the charges of idolatry and impiety were reciprocally and virulently applied to each other by the contending parties.

The emperor was charged with being perverted by the Mahometans, who had not only sneered at the Christians for their attachment to images, but had actively demonstrated their abhorrence of this superstition, and attempted its abolition. The caliph Yezid, instigated by a Jew, had commanded all the images in the Christian churches of his dominions to be destroyed; and in 726, Leo published a severe edict against this species of idolatry, in which he strictly prohibited their receiving any kind of worship and adoration, and commanded them to be removed from all the churches. The prejudices of the multitude, however, are not to be subverted by royal edicts; and this cause, which they imagined the cause of Heaven itself against a disobedient and impious monarch, was supported by legions, who flocked with eagerness to the standards of the degraded saints, and to that of the patriarch Germanus, who preached and who wrote in their defence. The emperor deposed the disobedient prelate, and raised the pliant Anastasius to the vacant see. But their united efforts were ineffectual: the people believed themselves released from their obedience to an impious apostate, who had betrayed the faith; and beholding with horror the images of their Saviour and of the saints ignominiously torn in pieces, or burned by the command of Leo, they assembled in a tumultuous manner, demolished the statues and pictures of the emperor, and surrounded the gates of the



royal palace; but, after being repulsed with great slaughter, they were compelled to a temporary compliance with the offensive edict.

The successful struggle of Leo, for the demolition of idolatry in the imperial city, did not, however, influence the conduct of his subjects in the other parts of the empire, nor render his measures acceptable to the Roman see. The horrors of civil discord raged in the islands of the Archipelago, in Asia, and in Italy. Gregory II. who had opposed, with great vehemence, the attempts of the emperor, respecting image-worship, endeavored to soften his resentment, by claiming great merit for the measures he had taken in Italy, in restraining the growing power of the Lombards; and wrote to Leo, earnestly entreating a revocation of the imperial edict. But the emperor, zealously attached to the cause he had espoused, and entirely convinced that Gregory had been actuated rather by motives of self-interest than a regard for the empire, was so far from acceding to this request, that he dispatched private orders to the exarch of Ravenna, and to the governor of Rome, to apprehend the contentious prelate, and send him to Constantinople. The people of Rome were too little attached to the emperor, to suffer the execution of this order; the bishop excommunicated the exarch; and by letters exhorted the Venetians, with Luitprand, king of the Lombards, and all the cities of the empire, to continue steadfast in the catholic faith.

Not satisfied with this mark of opposition, Gregory absolved the people of Rome from their allegiance to the emperor; it is also reported that he occasioned the tribute, which had been annually paid from Rome and Italy into the imperial treasury, to be withheld. This step was the signal of revolt: the imperial officers were massacred or banished; the people of Rome refused to acknowledge the authority of the emperor, and chose new magistrates; the inhabitants of Ravenna submitted to the dominion of Luitprand; and the inhabitants of Naples murdered their duke, Exhilaratus, the imperial governor, together with his son, and one of his principal officers. Leo, exasperated by these proceedings, confiscated the revenues which had been paid from Sicily, Calabria, and Apulia, to the Roman pontiff, and subjected the clergy of those countries, and the various churches of Illyricum, to the spiritual jurisdiction of the Byzantine see.

The emperor opposed the worship of images with reiterated fury; and enforced his prohibition by threatening the guilty opposer of his laws with severe and exemplary punishments. A favorite image of Christ, which was destroyed, was the signal of another rebellion; and the adorers of images, who were

called Iconolatræ, and their opponents the Iconoclastæ, mutually resisted, detested, and persecuted each other.

The death of Leo, and that of Gregory III. who died the same year, and whose attachment to image-worship had not been less decisive than that of his predecessor, did not restore tranquility to the church and the empire. Leo was succeeded by his son Constantine Copronymus, who renewed his father's edict, and spoke in equally pointed terms against the practice of idolatry. He chose, however, to enforce his opinions upon the people by the milder and universally acknowledged authority of a general council, rather than by the mandates of an imperial law. In 754, he convened at Constantinople a council, consisting of 338 bishops, in which not only the worship but the use of images was unanimously condemned. A considerable destruction of the objects of idolatrous worship ensued. The decrees of the assembly, which the Greeks regarded as the seventh general council, were received by great numbers, though not universally, even in the eastern churches, but were utterly rejected at Rome. The opposition made by this rational but too zealous emperor to the reigning superstition, was not confined to the worship of images: he opposed the invocation of saints, and the adoration of relics; and evinced his confirmed abhorrence of the monks, whom he regarded as the great supporters of superstition. An edict was published at Constantinople, and in all the cities of the empire, forbidding any person to embrace a monastic life, under severe penalties. At Constantinople, most of the religious houses were suppressed; and the monks compelled not only to marry, but to lead their brides in public procession through the streets. Leo III. who succeeded Constantine in 775, was not more favorable to the cause of idolatry than his progenitors: he openly declared his abhorrence of image-worship; and punished with severity those who had presumed to pay any kind of adoration to the saints, to the Virgin Mary, or to their images. The zeal of Leo for the propagation of religion was gratified by the conversion of Elrich, monarch of the Bulgarians, who, impelled by an irresistible desire to embrace Christianity, resigned his crown, and repaired to Constantinople, where he was entertained by Leo with every demonstration of affection and esteem; and, after he had received the sacrament of baptism, was created a patrician, and married to a relation of the empress.

The infant son of Leo, who was but ten years of age, was the nominal successor of his father: but the reigns of government were assumed by the ambitious Irene, who transacted all the affairs of the empire; and not only resisted the efforts, which, at a more mature age, were made by her son to throw off her



yoke, with intrepidity and success, but with her own hands chastised him for his temerity. This weak prince, who appears to have continued, with the exception of a few intervals, under the supreme government of this artful and profligate woman, occasioned great contests amongst the clergy by divorcing himself from his first wife Mary, and at the instigation of Irene, espousing another. The flagitious empress was not however contented with rendering him odious in the eyes of his people: but by her orders he was at length seized, and tormented with the most shocking cruelty; and by his death, and that of the brothers of her late husband, she seated herself without a rival upon the imperial throne. The atrocious conduct of Irene was justified, in the eyes of the friends of image-worship, by her zeal in their defence; many eulogiums were composed to the honor of this princess, who was afterwards converted into a saint, and, as such, stands recorded in the Greek Calendar.

Under the administration of Irene, the Iconolatræ enjoyed not only a respite from their sufferings, but the utmost protection and favor. New images decorated the walls which had lately been deprived of their ornaments; and she adopted the popular measure of annulling the edicts of former emperors against the worship of idols. In 786, in concert with Adrian bishop of Rome, a council was convened by the emperor Constantine at Constantinople; but, being disturbed by the officers of the army and the soldiery, it was in the following year transferred to Nice in Bithynia, where the impiety of the image-breakers was severely condemned, the adoration of images and of the cross re-established, and severe punishments were denounced against the daring transgressors of the established rites. The superstitious dogmas of this assembly were supported by false records and spurious manuscripts, and confirmed by a chain of such arguments as admirably suited the wisdom of the cause. The assembled fathers expressed their abhorrence of images made to represent the Deity; but gave a full sanction to the crucifix, which they commanded to be solemnly dedicated, and placed upon the walls of churches or private houses, and upon the public roads. Images of our Lord were also to be made, as well as of the Virgin Mary (who was called the *immaculate Mother of God*), of the venerable angels, and of all the saints.

This species of worship was so passionately admired by the Greeks, that they esteemed the second Nicene council as a signal blessing derived to them from the interposition of Heaven; and, in commemoration of it, instituted an anniversary festival, called the Feast of Orthodoxy. In this council the legate of the bishop of Rome attempted, in the name of his

master, to explain the worship due to the saints, as an inferior kind of homage, which he called *dulia*; the adoration due to the Supreme Being was said to be of a more exalted nature, and was called *latria*. The versatile bishops, who under the former reigns had professed their dislike to the worship of the saints, scrupled not to make their peace with Irene, and to secure their continuance in their possessions, by a recantation of those opinions which were deemed heretical by the second council of Nice. Deplorable was the state of the eastern empire during the eighth century: government was weakened by perpetual revolutions for electing or deposing different emperors. Military discipline decayed; learning was neglected or despised; every species of atrocity was practised under the mask of religious zeal; and the empire was repeatedly invaded. In Syria and Palestine, several cities were destroyed by dreadful earthquakes; an extraordinary darkness, which lasted from the beginning of August to October, and occasioned little distinction between night and day, overspread that country; and this was followed by the plague, which broke out in Calabria, soon spread over Sicily, Greece, and the islands in the Ægean sea, and at length reached to Constantinople, where it raged furiously during a space of three years.

The incursions of the Saracens were grievously felt both in the eastern and western provinces. In the reign of Philipppicus, these fierce barbarians invaded Thrace, took the city of Pergamus, and committed dreadful ravages in various parts of the empire: they even marched up to the gates of the imperial city; and during thirteen months, in which they besieged Constantinople, war, famine, and the pestilence successively prevailed. To add to the affliction of the eastern Christians, the caliph Omar, exasperated at the courage and resolution of those patriots, who compelled him to abandon the design of taking the capital of the east, vented his chagrin against his Christian subjects, by first prohibiting them the exercise of their religion, and soon afterwards by commanding the renunciation of their faith, and the profession of Mahometanism, upon pain of death. So circumstanced, it is not wonderful that the weak, the indifferent, or the timid, should yield to the will of their intolerant masters. Christianity was in some places entirely extirpated; but a few still maintained, with unshaken constancy, the religion of Christ at the hazard of their lives. In 714, the Saracens invaded Spain, and destroyed the empire of the Visigoths in that country, which had been established for upwards of 300 years. Their conquests extended to the maritime coasts of Gaul, and to the islands of Sicily and Sardinia: wherever they settled, these ferocious barbarians attempt-



ed to propagate the doctrines of Mahomet, and to abolish a religion so opposite to all their favorite principles. In Spain and Sardinia, the Christians suffered the most severe oppressions from the rigid laws which were enacted by their barbarous conquerors.

The irruption and settlement of the Saracens in the south, the fierce and bloody conflicts of barbarous and pagan nations in the north, and the universal corruption of religion, and decay of learning, exhibit a gloomy picture of the state of Europe during the eighth century. Amidst this wreck of virtue and excellence, the papal power attained during this century to an unexpected height; and that alliance was formed between superstition and despotism, which for succeeding ages proved the scourge of mankind. To trace these great events to their source, it will be necessary to direct our attention more particularly to the state of Italy, and to its connexion with foreign powers.

Ravenna, which, together with several other cities in Italy, was not in the power of the Lombards, but governed by an officer of the emperor, who had the title of Exarch, had, in the revolt against the edict of Leo, fallen into the hands of Luitprand, king of the Lombards. Gregory, the Roman pontiff, could not however behold, without apprehension, the increase of a power which in time might become inimical to his authority; he therefore engaged Ursus, duke of Venice, to assert the rights of the empire, and to retake the cities of the exarchate during the absence of Luitprand, by whom they were again subdued in a succeeding popular revolt. Incensed at Gregory III. who had received into his protection Thrasimund, duke of Spoletta, the daring revoker against the king of the Lombards, Aistulphus, the successor of Luitprand, besieged and subdued Ravenna, and terminated the race of exarchs, who had reigned with a delegated authority from the time of Justinian.

The trembling pontiff, in dread of an invasion from the incensed Lombards, solicited the assistance of Charles Martel, mayor of the palace to Childeric, king of the Franks, whose power might be serviceable in repressing the enemies of Gregory; though the indifference he had demonstrated to the interest of the clergy, in distributing abbeys and bishoprics to the laity, and assigning the tithes to his soldiers, had afforded no very favorable specimen of his regard for the church. The effects of this negotiation were prevented by the deaths of Charles and of Gregory. The new pontiff Zachary became reconciled to Luitprand; and, considering the weakness

of the imperial power in Europe, embracing the opportunity to disavow an authority which at this time was little more than nominal.

The alliance, however, between France and the Roman see did not end here. Pepin, the son of Charles, succeeded to the office of his father; but not content with the power, which in virtue of his employment he enjoyed, of regulating all the affairs of the kingdom, he aspired to the title of king, and formed the design of deposing the weak and unfortunate Childeric. The enormous powers which had been acquired by the Roman pontiff over the successors of the barbarian conquerors of the western provinces, made it unsafe to transact so important an affair without its concurrence; and Pepin was by his devoted servants, the states of the realm, advised to consult the pope to resolve the question—"Who best deserved to be king—he who was possessed of the power, or he who was only possessed of the title?" The necessities of the party consulted were not less than those of Pepin; and Zachary, oppressed by the apprehension both of the Lombards and Greeks, declared that, in his opinion, he ought rather to be styled a monarch who was invested with the powers attached to that office, than he who possessed only the regal title. The last descendant of Clovis was in consequence of this decision immediately divested of the external marks of royalty; and, with his infant son, compelled to assume the monastic habit, and to retire from the pleasures and engagements of public life to the solitude of a cloister. Stephen the successor of Zachary, was not less favorable to the perfidious Pepin. In a journey which he made into France, he absolved the usurper from his oath of allegiance to the deposed king, anointed him, and invested him with the regal crown. The object of Stephen in this journey was not, however, to confirm the aggrandizement of Pepin. He wanted his assistance against the increasing power of the Lombards; and enforced his entreaties not only by promises both of temporal prosperity and eternal happiness, but by denunciations of inevitable damnation if he refused to comply. He preached not in vain. Pepin, whose ambition had made him regardless of the rights of his sovereign, was from the same principle obedient and grateful to that power which had secured the crown to his posterity. He entered Italy with his army; and, after several encounters, compelled the Lombard king to surrender the possession of all those territories which the Greek emperors had possessed in Italy, into the hands of the bishop of Rome. The grant of twenty-two cities was the liberal demonstration of Pepin's gratitude to the pontiff,



or it was the expiation by which he attempted to compensate for his perfidy and treason. Pepin by this liberal grant secured a temporal principality to the successors of the poor and humble Peter.

The alliance between the king of the Franks and the pontiff of Rome was confirmed by mutual necessities, and strengthened by mutual obligations. In the pontificate of Adrian I. the restless and enterprising Lombards invaded the provinces which had been granted by Pepin to the pope. His son Charlemagne did not, however, permit them to resume their authority; he asserted the rights of the Roman see; and entering with a powerful army into Italy, subdued the Lombards, assumed to himself the title of their king, and was crowned at Rome in the year 774. Additional donations to the pope, and a confirmation of the grants bestowed by his father, were the fruits of this additional extent of dominion to Charlemagne. Several cities and provinces were ceded by him to the Roman see, under the specious pretext of atoning for his sins, by munificence to the church. But to the policy, rather than to the piety of the monarch, must his liberality be ascribed. Such indeed was his thirst of dominion, that he is believed to have dispatched an embassy to Constantinople, to propose a matrimonial union between himself and the ambitious Irene. This proposal, which might have accomplished the re-union of the eastern and western empires, was counteracted by the intrigues of a favorite eunuch, and the spirit of the Grecian nobles: the infamous princess was confined first in a monastery, and afterwards banished to the island of Lesbos, where the anguish of disappointed ambition shortened a life, which was long since forfeited to justice by repeated crimes. Disappointed therefore in this project, Charlemagne secretly aspired after the title of emperor of the west; and his magnificent donations were intended to conciliate the affection of the pontiff, and to engage him in the promotion of his designs. Amongst the other gratifications to the pope, Charlemagne granted an injunction for introducing the Gregorian office, and mode of singing into the churches of France and Germany, in conformity with that of Rome. Leo was not ungrateful for these favors: or Christmas-day in the year 800, he conferred upon his munificent and obedient patron the object of his ardent aspirations, and saluted him with the title of emperor, in the church of St. Peter at Rome, amidst the acclamations of the Roman people. Leo was rewarded for his assistance by the grant of jurisdiction over the city of Rome, and the adjacent territories, which were however subordinate to the supreme dominion of the western emperor.

Entire agreement between Charlemagne and the Roman pontiff, in matters of faith, was not the bond by which they were united; theirs was the political connection of mutual interest, not of religion. Charlemagne, by the advice of the French prelates, who were no friends to the second council of Nice, had ordered a judicious divine to compose *four Books concerning Images*, which refuted the absurd decrees of the Nicene assembly with judgment and with spirit. These books he sent in 790 to the Roman pontiff Adrian, who attempted to answer and refute the objections of Charlemagne. The prince however, in 794, assembled a council, composed of three hundred bishops, at Frankfort, in which the important question concerning the worship due to images was agitated and examined. In this council, the opinions supported in the *Four Books*, of the lawfulness and expediency of placing pictures in churches, either as ornament to the building, or as useful in refreshing the memory, was allowed, but the worship of them absolutely forbidden; and according to the testimony of Roger Hovedon and other English writers, the British churches assented to this decision.

The first idea of transubstantiation appears to have arisen during this century, though it was long before it was generally adopted, or before it assumed the name. The Constantinopolitan fathers in 754, amongst other things against images, having said that Christ had no otherwise left us an image of himself than in the eucharist; the Nicene fathers in 787, alleged in opposition that this was not the image of Christ, but his very body and blood; which first assertion of this monstrous absurdity, as well as many others, was made by the *Iconolatæ*, or worshippers of images.

The investigation of the important question respecting images, was not the sole difficulty by which the consciences of the Christians were distracted during this century. The Greeks reproached the Latin church with having added the word *filioque* to the Byzantine creed, and asserted that the Divine Spirit proceeded only from the Father; while the Latins, on their part, affirmed that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son. In a council held in France in 776, at which the ambassadors of the emperor assisted, the controversy was examined and agitated; and the conduct of the Spanish and Gallic clergy, who had interpolated the word *filioque* into the creed of Constantinople, was severely arraigned. But the conference terminated in the usual mode. Each party continued inflexibly attached to the opinions they had embraced, and no alteration was obtained on either side.

Many additional causes occurred, to increase the mutual



dislike of the contending patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople: nor was either party averse to any opportunity of exhibiting their respective pretensions and reciprocal antipathy. Either convinced by the arguments, or obedient to the commands of their sovereign, the bishops of Constantinople had steadily opposed the decisions of the Roman see, respecting the worship of images; their power and riches had been extended by the measures taken by the emperor, to humble the haughty successors of St. Peter; and the question respecting the procession of the Holy Spirit was a new source of rancor and contention between those rival brethren. Instances of the most flagitious conduct are to be found in the characters of these respective bishops. Anastasius, the Byzantine patriarch, who, upon the deposition of Germanus, and the manifestation of his attachment to the opinions of the Iconoclasts, had been raised to the vacant see, had the audacious villany in the ensuing reign, in order to support the claims of an usurper to the throne, to calumniate the emperor as a believer in the simple humanity of Christ, and to confirm his testimony by swearing on the wood of the cross which he held in his hand. This atrocious conduct was resented by the emperor; he ordered the prelate to be publicly scourged, and to be carried through the city, mounted upon an ass, with his face to the tail; but he added not to his ignomy the deserved mortification of a deprivation from the see. The conduct of Zachary, in relation to Pepin's claim to the kingdom of France, was scarcely less atrocious than that of Anastasius. Indeed, whatever vices have disgraced the annals of mankind are to be found amongst these degenerate and corrupted ecclesiastics. Compulsion and artifice were continually employed to procure the possession of the see of Rome. In 767, Constantine, of a noble family, obtained possession of the papacy; and, after his accession to the pontificate, was ordained sub-deacon, deacon, and bishop; in order to enable him to retain the seat he had usurped: Great commotions was the consequence of this attempt; and an armed force from the king of the Lombards subdued Constantine, and compelled him to retire; and he received afterwards, from his successor, the reward of his violence, by a cruel and premature death.

The name of Charlemagne, whose ambition and policy so considerably augmented the revenues of the church, makes a considerable figure in the annals of ecclesiastical history. Nor were these accessions the only advantages derived to the Christian world from the zeal of this monarch. No less from the political motive of subduing them under his power, than from the desire of propagating religion, he abolished the idolatrous wor-

ship of the Saxons, destroyed the temples of their gods, and, more indeed by compulsion than by argument, induced them to a nominal profession of Christianity.

His aversion to superstition was ardent and sincere, though it was sometimes sacrificed to motives of policy; and his veneration for the sacred writings was unaffected. Every encouragement was extended by him for the promotion of literature, and of that branch in particular which relates to the illustration of Scripture. In his Capitularies he imposed several salutary restraints on the monastic orders; he reformed the ritual of the Latin church, and ordered it to be received in all the churches of his dominions. That his attempts to restore the knowledge of true religion, and to animate his subject to the vigorous exertions of genius, should not be successful, will not excite our astonishment, if we consider the state of society at that period. It is greatly to his honor to have made the attempt, and by apparently the most judicious means. Schools contiguous to the principal churches and monasteries were erected by his command, for the instruction of youth in religion and learning. Every encouragement was offered, both by the example and munificence of the emperor, to the exertions of genius; and no measure was left unessayed to civilize the savage manners of the age, to restore Christianity, and to revive the decayed interests of literature.

From the review of the councils held during the eighth century, one might on a cursory view, be tempted to conceive that the remedies applied to the increasing evils had been efficacious, and that additional restraints were altogether unnecessary. Corruption and profligacy, however, had so far invaded all ranks of society, that few were either qualified or disposed to stem the torrent of iniquity and folly. The eastern emperors, and the clergy of the whole Christian world, were occupied by the contests concerning images. In France, Charles Martel applied the revenues of the church to the support of the state; and Spain, oppressed by the victorious arms of the Saracens, was not in a condition to offer her assistance. Some canons, for the better regulation of the church, and the reformation of the clergy, were made in the great council of Nice, and in the lesser councils of Italy, France, and England. These assemblies were all under the supreme dominion of the emperors or kings. The eastern potentates, as long as they retained their Italian dominions, regularly confirmed the election of the Roman pontiff; they assumed the right not only of interfering, but of deciding, in controversies of a merely religious nature, which was a privilege unclaimed by the emperor of the west. The power of the Roman bishop was still how-



ever confined within prescribed limits. He could determine nothing material by his sole authority; the bishops of provinces under his jurisdiction frequently voted in direct opposition to him. The emperor claimed the sole right of convening and presiding in councils; he occasionally inspected all the affairs of the church, and enacted regulations respecting the morals and conduct of the clergy; and from the monasteries and churches he derived a revenue proportioned to their possessions.

Under the Gothic princes of Spain, the national councils were composed of the bishops and the principal abbots, who, while they agitated the important questions of ecclesiastical discipline and doctrine, excluded the laity from their debates. This business concluded, the great men of the kingdom were admitted into their assemblies; and their decrees were ratified by the consent of the people. Under the dominion of the kings of the second race in France, and in some parts of England, practices somewhat similar prevailed. The nobles took their place in the assembly along with the clergy; civil as well as ecclesiastical business engaged the attention of the assembly; the bishops composed articles for the internal policy of the church, and the nobles for the prosperity of the state, which were ratified by the sovereign, and obtained the names of chapters or capitularies.

Accessions of power and opulence were not confined to the rapacious see of Rome, but immense riches flowed in various channels into the treasuries of the monasteries and of the churches. A number of convents were founded, and richly endowed; and the revenues of the secular clergy were augmented by the superstitious opinion, that the punishments annexed by God to the commission of sin were to be averted by liberal donations to the church. This opinion, which during succeeding ages drew continual supplies of wealth into the ecclesiastical coffers, afforded in this century a pretext for the liberality of princes to the church. Provinces, cities, and fortresses were added to its possessions; and the monks and superior clergy were invested with the appendages and prerogatives of sovereign princes.

In the granting of these investitures we must, however, look beyond the avowed motive. Policy was thought to require the attachment of a body of men, whose influence was acknowledged by all; whose sacred characters, and spiritual powers, were found of the utmost efficacy in restraining the rebellious and turbulent spirit of the nobles; and whose gratitude and services might be secured by ample and liberal donations.

The influence of the clergy was indeed rendered enormous, by the authority which was attributed to their censures. The thunders of excommunication rolled over the head of the impious offender against the authority of the church; and all ranks and degrees trembled at the execution of a sentence, which deprived them not only of their privileges as citizens, but of their rights as men. The powers of the Romish church, in particular, were extended by the success of the missionaries of Germany, who bent the necks of that fierce and barbarous people to their spiritual yoke. The hereditary prejudices of the barbarians were indeed a fruitful source of the power acquired by the Roman see; and it is to their influence we must ascribe the superior advantages obtained by the western clergy over their brethren of the east. The priests of paganism had obtained an entire ascendancy over the minds of an ignorant and superstitious people; every civil and military transaction was regulated by their councils and authority; and even the domestic transactions of these barbarians were directed by the advice of the ministers of religion. By a very natural and easy transition, the powers which had been enjoyed by the pagan priesthood were acknowledged in the ministers of Christ; the haughty barbarians, who had spurned at and subverted the civil authority, fell prostrate at the feet of either their vanquished or conquering enemies, who were dignified with the episcopal character; and, on the other hand, it must be confessed, that the Romish clergy were not at all averse to receiving every advantage which might be derived from the superstition and ignorance of this people. They readily accepted the honors paid them by the barbarous nations; and the Roman bishop founded his claim as successor to the sovereign pontiff, and to the high priest of the Druids, upon pretended authorities drawn from the sacred oracles of God. The reverence with which the bishops of the Roman see were occasionally addressed, exceeded the measure of adulation commonly paid even to royalty. The custom of kissing the feet of the pope, upon his accession to the papacy, was quite established in the eighth century, though for some succeeding ages it was practised upon that occasion only. This custom was derived, in common with various other honors, from the sovereign pontiff, to whose privileges the bishop of Rome had succeeded. It had been introduced by the emperor and pontiff Caligula; probably in part to obtain one mark of adoration which had never been paid to his predecessors; and partly through the absurd vanity of exhibiting his magnificent slipper of gold, enriched with precious stones.

The introduction of the clergy into military offices was



a circumstance not very favorable to their piety or virtue. John, the deacon of the great church at Constantinople, was created admiral of the imperial fleet against the Saracens; and lost his life in a mutiny, the effect of his imprudent severity against the refractory mariners. The troops of Naples were commanded by a sub-deacon; and the different functions of bishop and soldier were executed by Gevilieb, bishop of Mentz. This exemplary churchman directed a challenge in the most violent terms to another warlike bishop, whom he accused of killing his father; nor was the death of his antagonist considered as the smallest impediment to the discharge of his sacred function.

In the second council of Nice regulations were adopted for preventing in some degree the increasing ignorance of the clergy, by the canon which commanded an examination of the candidate for a bishopric, by interrogating him concerning his acquaintance with the liturgy, the gospels, and epistles, and the decrees of councils; and some restraint was put upon their private avarice, by a prohibition to the bishops or abbots to dispose of the goods of their churches or monasteries.

Ignorance is the true and genuine parent of vice; and in an age so unfavorable to knowledge and virtue, we must not expect to find even the clergy exempt from that depravity which contaminated all classes of society. Luxury pervaded the sacerdotal order; and the flagitious conduct of the priests and monks called for repeated restrictions. In the council of Frankfort, abbots were prohibited from inflicting severe punishments on the offending monks; and from the shocking cruelty of putting out the eyes, or cutting off the limbs, of their inferior brethren whatever might be their offence. The reformation of the clergy, from the deplorable errors and misconduct by which they were disgraced, was an object with several of the bishops, who were shocked at the licentiousness and vice of some of that order. For this purpose, Chrodegandus, bishop of Metz, established the institution of canons, or ecclesiastics, who, without adopting the monastic habits or method of life, should dwell together, and eat at one common table; and should assemble at appointed hours for the celebration of divine service. This order was intended to prevent the vices of the clergy, by removing them from mean and temporal pursuits; they were, however, distinguished from the monks, by not being confined, in the performance of their ecclesiastical functions, to the walls of their monasteries, but were allowed to discharge the clerical duties in different churches committed to their care. The western nations adopted this new order with

celerity: and numerous monasteries were erected for this purpose in Italy, Germany, and France. The worship of images, and the efficacy of donations to the church for the remission of sins, were the reigning tenets of the present age. They had been inculcated at a previous period, and had been increasing for some time in their extent and reputation. False as the foundations for those opinions were, they were not further removed from truth than many other doctrines which disgrace and disfigure the annals of this century. Religion was intermixed with absurdity, and truth and falsehood so blended, that it required more than common abilities to separate the useful and excellent from the mass of error.

In the course of the preceding pages, several instances of attempts to regulate and improve the discipline and ceremonies of the church have been occasionally noticed. In the administration of the Lord's Supper new rites were introduced, and new regulations took place. A superstitious regard for the elements had lessened the number of communicants in this peculiarly Christian ordinance; but the oblations were too important to suffer the clergy quietly to acquiesce in this defection. They contrived therefore a means for continuing these, but without improving in any degree the sentiments of the people, whom they persuaded that, provided they continued the oblations, the service would still be useful to them. Instead of a real communion with the bread and wine, they were therefore presented with a substitute of a much less awful nature, bread over which solemn prayer had been made, and to which they gave the name of *hallowed bread*.

Those who, after partaking of the regenerating waters of baptism, had relapsed into sin, were persuaded that they might regain the purity they had forfeited by their iniquities, by the assumption of the monastic habit, which contained all the virtue of a second baptism. In consequence of this belief, and the increasing veneration for monastic institutions, several monarchs assumed the habits of monks; and, in the short period of little more than two centuries, thirty English kings or queens resigned the splendors of royalty for the retirement of a cloister. The superstitious and indolent Christian committed the welfare of his own soul, and that of his departed friends, to the care of an avaricious monk or priest, who performed, or who affected to perform, in private, those prayers which were to relieve the sufferings of souls detained in purgatory, and to ensure other blessings to his liberal employer. During the long dominion of heathenism, superstition had entirely exhausted her talents for invention: so that, when the same spirit,



pervaded Christianity, its professors were necessarily compelled to adopt the practices of their predecessors, and to imitate their idolatry.

Amongst the other superstitious observances derived from this source, were the ceremonies made use of in cutting the hair of children. It had been usual not to cut the hair of a child till it had attained a certain age; and the person to whom the hair was sent was considered as acquiring, by that means, a near degree of relationship to the child. The pagans usually appropriated the first cuttings of the hair of their infants as an offering to some of their divinities. This pagan rite was, with numberless others, adopted by the Christians; and the *Ordo Romanus* contains several prayers which were anciently repeated upon that occasion, and are called *Orationes ad tonsurandum puerum*. It has already been observed that marriages were solemnized by the clergy, at a very early period, in the Christian world. The imperial laws declared, however, the legality of those matrimonial contracts which were not solemnized by the benediction of the clergy; and, from various reasons, the primitive mode of marrying was considerably neglected. Some of the zealous emperors, who were disposed to reform the abuses which had been practised in the church, considered this as a culpable deviation from the primitive mode. In the year 780, it was enacted by Charlemagne, that no marriage should be celebrated in any other way than by a benediction, with sacerdotal prayers and oblations. About the year 900, Leo the philosopher, the eastern emperor, revived the same practice in the churches within his jurisdiction, which has continued ever since that period.

The great controversy respecting images so fully occupied the attention of the Christian world, as to afford little leisure, whatever might have been their inclination, to attend to many other speculations. The sectaries of this period were even fewer than those of the preceding century, and continued but for a short time to interrupt the unity of the church.

The Albanenses, who derived their appellation from the residence of their founder, are said to have revived the Gnostic and Manichaen doctrines of two principles. They denied not only the divinity, but even the humanity of Jesus Christ; and asserted that he neither suffered, rose from the grave, nor ascended into heaven. This sect entirely rejected the doctrine of the resurrection; affirmed that the general judgment was already accomplished, that the torments of the damned consisted only in the evils of the present state, that free will was not given to man, and that there was no such thing as original sin. To these tenets they added the practice of administering

baptism only to adults; and affirmed further the unlawfulness of oaths, and that a man can impart to himself a portion of the Holy Spirit.

The Ethnophrones (Paganizers) professed Christianity, but at the same time associated every practice of the heathen world with the profession of opinions diametrically opposite to them. In conformity to this absurd system, they practised judicial astrology, every species of divination, and carefully observed all the feasts and ceremonies of paganism.

Towards the close of this century some opinions were propagated in Spain, which occasioned considerable disturbance. Felix, bishop of Urgel in Catalonia, was consulted by Elipand, the archbishop of Toledo, concerning the sense in which Jesus Christ was to be called the Son of God; and whether as a man, he ought to be considered as the adopted or natural Son of the Father. The reply given by Felix was acceptable to the archbishop—That Jesus Christ, according to his human nature, could only be considered as the Son of God by adoption, and a nominal son. This decision, which was propagated by the two Spanish prelates, was extremely offensive to the greater part of the church. The censures of several councils induced the timid Felix to make a retraction of his opinions, which however he never sincerely abjured, but closed his life with a firm conviction of their truth. The dominion of the Saracens proved more favorable to Elipand, who with impunity enjoyed under their jurisdiction the profession of his religious sentiments.

Persecuted, and almost expelled, by the tumults and desolations of the eastern empire, annoyed by the factions and contentions of the west, in every part opposed by increasing superstition and ignorance, the only refuge which was left for oppressed science was in the retreats of monasteries, whence she seldom dawned upon a benighted world. Even the controversies which agitated the passions, and darkened the understandings of the Christians of this period, were discussed in writing by few, if their compositions are compared with the bulky volumes of preceding ages. Those of the Greeks, who were engaged in the great controversy concerning images, obscured and weakened their arguments by logical subtleties: nor were the Latins more successful in the dispute concerning the person of Christ. The veneration for images was strenuously supported; and the sectaries in general were vigorously attacked by John Damascenus, the most distinguished Greek author of this century who withdrew from the secular and honorable station of councillor of state, to the retirement of cloister; and whose adoption of the Aristotelian subtleties, and



elucidation of the doctrines of its great master, considerably increased the reputation of that philosophy. Under the title of Four Books concerning the Orthodox Faith, John Damascenus exhibited a complete summary of the doctrines of the church, which obtained the highest reputation among the Greeks. The doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son was insisted upon by Theodulphus bishop of Orleans, who farther distinguished himself as the author of a treatise upon baptism, and several poems. A refutation of the Koran was written by Bartholomew, a monk of Edessa in Syria; and the errors of Felix of Urgil, and of the archbishop Elipand, were attacked by Etherius a Spanish priest and by Paulinus bishop of Aquilcia.

Amongst the expositors of the sacred writings, we shall discover few marks of genius or originality. The prevalent opinions, concerning the faithfulness and excellence of the ancient commentators, were unfavorable to the exertions of reason and criticism; since the divines of this age, in consequence of this sentiment, conceived they perfectly fulfilled their duty in retailing the observations made by their predecessors. The erudition and ingenuity of John Damascenus were not sufficient to elevate him above this prejudice; he satisfied himself with exhibiting a commentary upon St. Paul's Epistles, extracted from the works of Chrysostom. The encouragement afforded by Charlemagne to the elucidation of the sacred writings, was not so favorable to them as it might have been, had not the ignorance of the age induced both the monarch and his expositors to fanciful and useless inferences, rather than to solid and practical illustrations. Our countryman, who is styled by way of eminence the venerable Bede, is amongst the most celebrated expositors of scripture in this century. Alcuin also, an Englishman, the preceptor and friend of Charlemagne, wrote a commentary on St. John; and Ambrose Authert, who attempted an explanation of the Revelations, obtained a distinguished rank amongst the sacred critics of this period. Homilies upon the Epistles and Gospels were compiled by the command of Charlemagne, which the priests were required to commit to memory, and to recite to the people. Alcuin, and Paul the deacon, had the principal share in these performances: others, however, produced similar compilations, the taste for which greatly increased towards the conclusion of this century.

The moral writers of this period are few in number, and very defective in excellence. Virtue was indeed recommended by the powerful arguments of example; but it was the example of preceding ages, the piety and morality of departed saints,

which was exhibited as a model to their descendants. It must indeed be confessed, that their actions were sometimes rather the result of fanaticism than of piety; and their example, in some respects, much more calculated to incite men to absurdity than to real excellence. Paul the Deacon, in his History of the Lombards, must be distinguished in a rank superior to the historians and biographers of the saints. Nor must the labors of Bede be forgotten: both civil and ecclesiastical affairs occupied his time and attention; and the venerable abbot of Farrow has given to the world and Ecclesiastical History; which, though in some respects chargeable with great credulity, is esteemed a faithful account of the transactions which took place during the period in which he wrote. The chronology of Bede is regulated by the Hebrew Bible; and he is distinguished as the first writer who rejected the chronology of the Septuagint. The authors of the Byzantine Histories, George Syncella and Theophanes, are deserving of attention:

If in this season of ignorance science might be said to exist, her principal residence must be certainly placed in Great Britain or Ireland. The preceptor of Charlemagne was a Briton; and his court derived its most distinguished literary ornaments from this source. Their superior desire for the promotion of knowledge was proportioned to their superior attainments; and France, Italy, and Germany bear witness to their accomplishments, and to their zeal in the cultivation of *scholastic theology*. Many British missionaries, fraught with religious knowledge, and influenced by a pious desire of imparting to their pagan neighbors the advantages they possessed, despising the difficulties of their way, and the dangers which awaited their arrival, crossed the ocean, and penetrated into the gloomy recesses of the German forests, for the instruction of that fierce and uncivilized people.

One of the most eminent missionaries of the eight century was Wilfrid, a Benedictine monk, who was descended from an illustrious British family, and whose vigorous and successful labors entitled him to the appellation of the Apostle of the Germans. That Wilfrid endeavored to accomplish the object of his mission by violence and stratagem; that he consulted the canons of the Romish church, rather than the dictates of the gospel; and that he was more solicitous to advance the interests of the papacy than the knowledge of true religion, cannot be denied. The German apostle was subtle, insinuating, and haughty; but his contempt of danger, his zeal, and his abilities, have justly entitled him to the notice of posterity. Repulsed in his first attempt to influence the minds of that



furious and ignorant people, he redoubled his efforts to propagate the faith. With unwearied zeal, and persevering diligence, he addressed his arguments both to the reason and to the passions of his auditors. His zeal for the authority of the pope (whose supremacy was by his means afterwards first acknowledged in a council convened by his archiepiscopal authority at Mentz) was honored by the highest approbation of the Roman pontiff, who consecrated him a bishop, and gave him the name of Boniface: he was distinguished also by the patronage and assistance of Charles Martel. Monasteries and churches were erected, by the assiduity of Boniface and his pious associates, on the ruins of the heathen temples, and consecrated groves of paganism. In the course of his ministerial labors, he was engaged in a warm dispute with his disciple Vigilus upon the validity of baptism, which had been performed by a priest, who, ignorant of the Latin language (which Boniface had introduced into the ritual of the German church,) had made a small mistake in the words of that ordinance. The Roman pontiff espoused the cause of the validity, and of Vigilus; and Boniface was determined upon revenge. This he effected by attacking the opinions of his disciple, who had heretically asserted the globular figure of the earth, and the existence of antipodes. The apostle, who, unlike his predecessor, was far from being possessed of *all knowledge*, could not comprehend this new system; and concluded, that Vigilus, by his strange assertions, could only mean that a world existed under this, inhabited by other men, and illuminated by other planets. In consequence of this idea, he accused Vigilus of the heresy of asserting a plurality of worlds; and Zachary the pontiff, who conceived the proposition equivalent to a declaration that all men were not descended from Adam, nor involved in his guilt, and consequently that Christ had not died for all, was extremely alarmed at a doctrine which he regarded as totally repugnant to scripture; he therefore ordered Boniface to convene a council, in which if the heretic refused to abjure his errors, he was to be degraded and lopped off, as a rotten member, from the body of the faithful. The event of these inquiries is uncertain; but as Vigilus was afterwards preferred to the see of Saltzburgh, and is honored as a saint, it is probable that he exculpated himself from the suspicion of heresy. Favored by princes and by popes, Boniface, in addition to the archiepiscopal see of Mentz, received the further honor of being created primate of Belgium and Germany. A tranquil death was not however the termination of a life devoted to the most active,

though frequently injudicious, exertions in the cause of Christianity. After forty years spent in his laborious mission, the apostle of Germany, with fifty ecclesiastics, his companions and friends, were, on their return into Friesland, inhumanly murdered by the inhabitants of that barbarous country. Besides his Lives of the Saints, Boniface composed some Sermons and Letters.



## CHAPTER X.

### THE NINTH CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—OF  
DOCTRINE AND SECTS IN THE NINTH CENTURY.—PROPAGA-  
TION OF THE GOSPEL IN THE NINTH CENTURY.

THE spirit of Christianity is but little consistent with the warlike spirit of the ninth century; however, therefore, we may commend the intentions of the illustrious son of Pepin, the means which he employed cannot meet our approbation. A large portion of his life was dedicated to the glorious purpose of establishing the religion of Jesus among the Huns, the Saxons, Frieslanders, and other unenlightened nations: but his piety was blended with violence, and his spiritual conquests were generally achieved by the force of arms. His son Lewis, undeservedly surnamed the Meek, inherited the defects of his father without his virtues; and was his equal in violence and cruelty, but greatly his inferior in all valuable accomplishments. Under his reign a very favorable opportunity was offered of propagating the gospel among the northern nations, and particularly among the inhabitants of Sweden and Denmark. A petty king of Jutland, named Harald Klack, being expelled from both his kingdom and country in the year 826 by Regner Lodbrock, threw himself at the emperor's feet, and implored his succor against the usurper. Lewis granted his request; and promised the exiled prince his protection and assistance, on condition that he would embrace Christianity, and admit the ministers of that religion to preach in his dominions. Harald submitted to these conditions; was baptized with his brother at Mentz, in 826; and returned into his country attended by two eminent divines, Ansgar or Anschaire, and Authbert; the former a monk of Corbey in Westphalia, and the latter belonging to a monastery of the same name in France. These venerable missionaries preached the gospel with remarkable success, during

the space of two years, to the inhabitants of Cimbria and Jutland.

After the death of his learned and pious companion Authbert, the zealous and indefatigable Ansgar made a voyage into Sweden, in 828, where his ministerial labors were crowned with distinguished success. On his return into Germany, in 831, he was decorated by Lewis the Meek with ecclesiastical honors; he was created archbishop of the new church at Ham-burgh, and of the whole north, to which dignity the superintendence of the church of Bremen was afterwards annexed in the year 844.

Under the reign of Basilius the Macedonian, who ascended the imperial throne of the Greeks in the year 867, the Sclavonians, Arentani, and certain provinces of Dalmatia, dispatched a solemn assembly to Constantinople, to declare their resolution of conforming to the ecclesiastical forms and civil jurisdiction of the Greeks. This proposal was received with admiration and joy; and was answered by a suitable ardor and zeal for the conversion of a people which seemed so ingenuously disposed to embrace the truth; a competent number of Grecian divines was accordingly deputed to instruct them in the knowledge of the gospel, and to admit them by baptism into the Christian church. The warlike nation of the Russians, having entered into a treaty of peace with Basilius, were engaged, by various presents and promises, to profess the truths of Christianity; in consequence of which, they not only received the ministers who were appointed to instruct them, but an archbishop, whom the Grecian patriarch Ignatius had sent among them, to perfect their conversion and establish their church.

Such was the commencement of Christianity among the Russians, who were inhabitants of the Ukraine; and who a short time before the conversion, fitted out a formidable fleet, and, setting sail from Kiovia for Constantinople, spread terror and dismay throughout the whole empire.

"Truth and candor," says an author,\* by no means too favorably disposed to Christianity, "must acknowledge, that the conversion of the North imparted many temporal benefits both to the old and new Christians. The rage of war, inherent to the human species, could not be healed by the evangelic precepts of charity and peace; and the ambition of catholic princes has renewed in every age the calamities of hostile contention. But the admission of the barbarians into the pale of civil and ecclesiastical society delivered Europe from the depredations,

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\* Gibbon.



by sea and land, of the Normans, the Hungarians, and the Russians, who learned to spare their brethren, and cultivate their own possessions. The establishment of law and order was promoted by the influence of the clergy; and the rudiments of art and science were introduced into the savage countries of the globe. The liberal piety of the Russian princes engaged in their service the most skilful of the Greeks, to decorate the cities, and instruct the inhabitants: the dome and the paintings of St. Sophia were rudely copied in the churches of Kiow and Novogorod; the writings of the fathers were translated into the Slavonic idiom; and three hundred noble youths were invited or compelled to attend the lessons of the college of Jaroslaus."

The Saracens had extended their usurpations with amazing success. Lords of Asia, a few provinces excepted, their conquests reached to the extremities of India, and the greater part of Africa. Ever disposed to enterprise, and allured by the fertility of the opposite shores, they willingly listened to the invitation of Count Julian, who, displeased with his sovereign, offered to introduce the Saracens into the heart of Spain; and this country, which during two hundred years resisted the arms of Rome, was in a few months subdued by the followers of Mahomet. Crete, Sardinia and Corsica were added, to their conquests, and in 827 Sicily submitted to the faith and jurisdiction of her Arabian conquerors. These conquests were the precursors of an attempt upon Rome: the barbarians penetrated to the walls of the city, and their divisions alone preserved from subjugation the ancient mistress of the west. The distress of the Romans was increased by the death of their pontiff Sergius II. In his successor they however found a chief fitted for the employments both of the cabinet and the field; and under Leo IV. the Saracens were repulsed from the shores of the Tyber. It may be easily conceived that the unprecedented prosperity of a nation accustomed to bloodshed and rapine, and which beheld the Christians with the utmost aversion, must have been extremely injurious to the progress of the gospel, and to the tranquility of the church. In the east, a prodigious number of Christian families embraced the religion of their conquerors, that they might be suffered to continue in the peaceful enjoyment of their possessions. Many indeed refused a compliance so criminal, and with pious magnanimity adhered to their principles in the face of persecution: such were however gradually reduced to extreme misery, and not only despoiled of their possessions and advantages, but in time were so entirely debased by the yoke of oppression, as to sink by degrees into the grossest ignorance, and to lose every ves-

tige of Christianity except the mere name, and a few external rites and ceremonies. The European Saracens, particularly those who were settled in Spain, were less intolerant, and seemed to have lost the greatest part of their native ferocity. It must however be confessed, that this mild and tolerating conduct of the Saracens was not without several exceptions of cruelty.

The European Christians experienced the most severe sufferings from the insatiable fury of the barbarous hordes which issued from the northern provinces. The Normans, under which general term are comprehended the Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes, whose habitations lay along the coasts of the Baltic sea, were a people accustomed to carnage and rapine. Their petty kings and chiefs, who subsisted by piracy and plunder, had, during the reign of Charlemagne, infested with their fleets the coasts of the German ocean; but were restrained by the opposition they met with from the vigilance and activity of that prince. In this century, however, they became more bold and enterprising; made frequent irruptions into Germany, Britain, Friesland, and Gaul, and carried along with them, wherever they went, fire and sword, desolation and horror. The impetuous fury of these barbarians not only spread desolation through the Spanish provinces, but even penetrated into the heart of Italy. In the year 857, they sacked and pillaged several cities of that region. The ancient records of the Franks abound with the most dismal accounts of their horrid exploits.

The first intention of these invaders extended only to plunder: but charmed at length with the beauty and fertility of the provinces which they were so cruelly depopulating, they began to form settlements in them. Too feeble, or too much occupied by other views, the European princes were not in a condition to oppose their usurpations: on the contrary, Charles the Bald was obliged, in the year 850, to resign a considerable part of his dominions to this powerful banditti; and a few years after, under the reign of Charles the Gross, emperor, and king of France, the famous Norman chief Godofred entered with an army into Friesland, and obstinately refused to sheath his sword before he was master of the whole province. Such however of the Normans as settled among the Christians, contracted a gentler turn of mind, and gradually departed from their primitive ferocity. Their marriages with the Christians contributed, no doubt, to their civilization, and engaged them to abandon the superstition of their ancestors with more facility, and to embrace the gospel with more readiness. Thus the haughty conqueror of Friesland was induced to profess the



Christian religion, after he had received in marriage, from Charles the Gross, Gisela, the daughter of the younger Lothaire.

The licentiousness of the clergy increased at this period, and particularly in those parts where the people still retained any share in the elections. In the east, tumult, discord, conspiracies, and treasons reigned uncontrolled, and all things were carried by violence. In the western provinces, the bishops and clergy were become extremely voluptuous and effeminate. The ignorance of the sacerdotal order was in many places so deplorable, that few of them could write or even read, and still fewer were capable of expressing their erroneous opinions in religion with any degree of method or perspicuity: hence it happened, that when any affair of consequence was to be committed to writing, they had commonly recourse to some person who was supposed to be endowed with superior abilities.

Many other circumstances concurred, particularly in the European nations, to produce and augment these evils. Among these we may account the calamities of the times; the sanguinary and perpetual wars which were carried on between Lewis the Meek and his family, the incursions and conquests of the barbarous nations, the gross and incredible ignorance of the nobility, and the affluence and riches that from every quarter flowed in upon the churches and religious seminaries. Nor were other motives wanting to dishonor the church, by introducing into it a corrupt ministry. A nobleman, who, from a deficiency of talents, activity, or courage, was rendered incapable of appearing with dignity in the cabinet, or with honor in the field, immediately directed his views towards the church, aimed at a distinguished place among its chiefs and rulers, and became in consequence a contagious example of stupidity and vice to the inferior clergy. Those patrons of churches, who possessed the right of election, unwilling to submit their disorderly conduct to the keen censure of zealous and upright pastors, commonly committed to the most abject, ignorant, and worthless ecclesiastics the care of souls. Besides all this, it frequently happened that princes, to satisfy the rapacity of their soldiers and domestics, boldly invaded the possessions of the church, which they distributed among their armies; and in consequence of this the priests and monks, in order to avoid perishing through hunger, abandoned themselves to the practice of violence, fraud, and every species of crime, which they considered as the only means that remained, of procuring themselves a subsistence.

The Roman pontiffs were raised to that high dignity by the suffrages of the sacerdotal order, accompanied by the voice of the people; but after their election, the approbation of the em-

peror was necessary to their consecration. There is indeed yet extant, an edict supposed to have been published, in the year 817, by Lewis the Meek, in which he abolishes this imperial right, and grants to the Romans not only the power of electing their pontiff, but also the privilege of installing and consecrating him when elected, without waiting for the emperor's consent. But this grant will deceive none who examine the affair with any degree of attention and diligence, since several of the learned have proved it spurious by the most irresistible arguments. It must however be confessed, that, after the time of Charles the Bald, a new scene was exhibited, and the important change above mentioned was really introduced. That prince having obtained the imperial dignity by the good offices of the bishop of Rome, returned this eminent service by exonerating the succeeding pontiffs for the obligation of waiting for the consent of the emperors, in order to their being installed in office. Thus from the time of Eugenius III. who was raised to the pontificate in 884, the election was carried on without the least regard to law, order, or even decency, and was generally attended with civil tumults and dissensions, until the reign of Otho the Great, who put a stop to these disorderly proceedings.

The principle of aggrandizing the Roman see, which had almost invariably governed the conduct of the popes, was not likely to be diminished at a period when they tasted the sweets of uncontrolled power. To render it the more permanent, they attempted to discard the authority of the king of France from whom so large a portion of their temporal authority was derived. Notwithstanding their increased dominion, the pontiffs of this century were however little distinguished by any eminent qualities; and to attempt to detail their history, would be to amuse the reader with a catalogue of names. Between the reigns of Leo IV. and Benedict III. a female pope has been introduced. This extraordinary or imaginary person is still characterized by the popular name of Pope Joan, but the papal title which is assigned to her is that of John VIII. She is reported to have been a native of Germany, and early to have conceived a strong attachment to literature and science. With a view of gratifying without restraint this favorite propensity, she is said to have assumed the habit of a man, and to have studied at Athens. From Athens she proceeded to Rome, where her eloquence, learning, and popular manners, commanded the admiration of all who heard her in the public disputations of the schools. By successive steps she ascended the papal throne in 854; but unfortunately she indulged in passions very inconsistent with the pursuits of literature, or the mainte-



hante of her dignity. After a reign of two years four months and four days, the fruit of her indiscretions exposed her in a very improper situation in a public procession; her paramour is said to have been a cardinal, who officiated as her chaplain; and she expired in this very procession of the pains of labor in the street, between the theatre called Coliseum and the church of St. Clement. Such is the narrative which was believed for successive centuries, and with so little offence to the Catholics themselves, that her statue is said to have occupied a place among those of the popes, in the cathedral of Sienna. It is also supported by the testimony of Platina, who dedicated his history of Sixtus IV.; by that of Ranulphus, in his *Polychronicon*; by Martinus Polonus, afterwards archbishop of Consenza; by Damasius, Pandulphus, Marianus Scotus, Sigibert abbot of Gemblours, archbishop Antoine, and is mentioned as a well known fact by both Petrarch and Boccacio. Notwithstanding these authorities, however, the fact has been questioned by some later critics; and their arguments on the subject are plausible. That a person of such abilities should expose herself to the danger of such an event as occasioned the discovery, is rather improbable; but it is still more improbable that the keen and ambitious Photius should neglect such an opportunity of exposing to ridicule the pretensions to infallibility which were maintained by a rival see. To all this it is added, that very accurate chronologies, and even the testimony of a contemporary, Anastasius, link the death of Leo and the elevation of Benedict, both which events are fixed by them to the year 857.\*

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\* The following from the pen of the celebrated Augustus Toplady on this disgraceful subject will be interesting to the reader:—

It has been confidently asserted, by some modern members of the Romish communion, that the story concerning pope Joan, is a mere fiction, invented by Protestants to blacken the infallible church. In opposition to which insinuation, I here insert the following extract, copied, verbatim, by his own hand, from that scarce and curious old book, entitled, *The Nuremburgh Chronicle*; which was printed at Nuremburg, in the year of our Lord 1493; in a popish city, by popish printers, and compiled by popish hands, no less than four and twenty years before the first dawn of the Reformation which Luther afterwards began.

The reader will find the following succinct history of this famous female pope in the above work, p. 169. b.

“Johannes Anglicus (et ut ferunt), ex mogunciaco ortus, malis artibus pontificatum adeptus, mentitus enim sexum, cum femina esset. Adolescens admodum, Athenas cum viro docto amatore proliciscitur: ibique præceptores bonarum artium audiendo, tantum profecit, ut, Romam veniens, paucos admodum etiam in sacris literis pares haberet, nedum superiores. Legendo autem et dis-

From the liberality of the Carvolingion race the see of Rome continued to derive substantial benefits; and though the pretended donations of Lewis the Meek are generally discredited,

putando docte et acute, tantum benevolentie et auctoritatis sibi comparavit, ut mortuo Leone, in ejus locum (Martinus ait), omnium consensu, pontifex crearetur. Verum postea a familiari compressa, cum aliquandiu occulte ventrem tulisset; tandem, cum ad Lateranensem basilicam proficisceretur, intra theatrum (quod Colosseum vocant) a Neronis colloso et sanctum Clementem, deloribus circumventa, peperit. Eoque loci mortua, pontificatus sui anno secundo, mense uno, diebus quatuor, sine ullo honore sepelitur. Sunt qui hæc duo scribant: pontificem ipsum, quum ad Lateranensem basilicam proficiscitur, detestandi facinoris causa, et viam illam consulto declinare; et, ejusdem vitandi erroris causa, dum primo in sede Petri collocatur, ad eam rem perforata, genitalia ab ultimo diacono obtrectari."

*Translation of the above.*

"John of English descent, but said to have been born at Mentz, obtained the popedom by sinister arts: for, she palmed herself upon the world as a man; when, in reality, she was a woman. In her youth, she accompanied a learned lover of hers, to Athens: and there, by attending the lectures of the best literary professors, she made so great a progress in erudition, that, on her arrival in Rome, she had few equals, and no superiors, in all kinds of theological knowledge. By her learned lectures, and by her masterly disputations, she acquired so much esteem and authority, that, on the death of Leo, she was, by universal consent (as Martinus affirms), created pope.

"Some time after her elevation to the pontifical dignity, she became criminally familiar with one of her domestics; and pregnancy was the consequence. She took care, by every precaution, to conceal this circumstance, as long as possible: until, at last, as she was walking (in public procession) to the Lateran church (in Rome), she was suddenly seized with labour-pains, and brought forth an infant, in that part of the street which lies between the Theatre and the church of St. Clement. She died on the spot; having held the popedom two years, one month, and four days.

"Some writers affirm, that, to this very day, whenever the pope walks in procession to the Lateran church, he constantly goes thither by another way; to avoid reviving the memory of the above mentioned detestable event; and that, in order to prevent a similar imposition," (i. e. in order that the infallible church may not again mistake the sex of her popes), "the new elected pontiff is properly examined, by the junior deacon, at the time of his holiness' first enthronement in St. Peter's chair; the seat whereof is perforated for that purpose."

Thus far the Nuremburgh Chronicle. To which I add the following indisputable particulars.

1. This said Mrs. Joan (who called herself John VIII.) was successor, in the popedom, to Leo IV. who died, A. D. 855. and she herself was succeeded by Benedict III.
2. Not only do many grave Roman catholic historians assert the fact; but



the circumstances of the family soon afforded a pretence for new usurpations. After the death of Lewis II. a fatal war broke out between the posterity of Charlemagne, among whom there were several competitors for the empire. This furnished the Italian princes, and the Roman pontiff John VIII. with a favorable opportunity of assuming to themselves the right of nominating to the imperial throne, and of excluding from all part in this election the nations, who had formerly the right of suffrage; and, if the opportunity was favorable, it was seized with avidity, and improved with the utmost dexterity and zeal. Their favor and interest were earnestly solicited by Charles the Bald, whose entreaties were rendered effectual by rich presents, prodigious sums of money, and most pompous promises; in consequence of which he was proclaimed emperor in 876, by the pontiff John VIII. and by the Italian princes assembled at Pavia. Carloman, and Charles the Gross, who succeeded him in the kingdom of Italy and in the Roman empire, were also elected by the Roman pontiff and the Italian princes. After the reign of these princes, the empire was torn in pieces; the most deplorable tumults and commotions arose in Italy, France, and Germany, which were governed or rather subdued and usurped, by various chiefs; and in this confused scene, the highest bidder was, by the assistance of the avaricious pontiffs, generally raised to the government of Italy, and to the imperial throne.

Thus the power and influence of the popes, in civil affairs, arose in a short time to an enormous height, through the favor and protection of the princes in whose cause they had employed the influence which superstition had given them over the minds

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the fact itself has also exercised the wits of more than a few ingenious poets of that communion. Witness the following epigramic verse.

*Papa pater patrum peperit papissa papellum.*

Not to mention those lines of Mantua, who was himself a Carmelite friar, and who represents pope Joan and her lover hanging in the ante-chamber of hell:

*Hic pendebat adhuc, sexum mentita virilem,  
Fœmina, cui triplici Phrygiam diademate mitram  
Suspendebat apex; et pontificalis adulter.*

3. The statue of this she-pope remained, in the cathedral church of Sienna, so low down, as until about the year 1677: when it was demolished, in order to stifle all memory of an incident so disastrous and dishonorable to the holy see.

The reader should be apprized, that a wooden print, representing the said lady and her child, was inserted originally, and still remains, in the Nuremburgh Chronicle above-mentioned.

Was not at least this pope the whore of Babylon?

of the people. The increase of their authority, in religious matters, was not less rapid, nor less considerable; and it arose from the same causes. The European princes suffered themselves to be divested of the supreme authority in religious affairs, which they had derived from Charlemagne; the power of the bishops was greatly diminished; and even the authority of both provincial and general councils began to decline. The Roman pontiffs, elated with this dangerous prosperity, were eagerly bent upon persuading all, and they had indeed the good fortune to persuade many, that the bishop of Rome was constituted and appointed by Jesus Christ supreme legislator and judge of the universal church; and that therefore the bishops derived all their authority from the Roman pontiff nor could the councils determine any thing without his permission and consent.

In order to gain credit to this new ecclesiastical system, so different from the ancient rules of church government, and to support the haughty pretension of the pontiffs to supremacy and independence, it was necessary to have recourse to the authority of ancient deeds. Some of the most ingenious and zealous partizans of the court of Rome were therefore employed by forging conventions, acts of councils epistles, and similar records, by which it might appear that, in the first ages of the church, the Roman pontiffs were clothed with the same spiritual majesty and supreme authority which they now assumed.

Among these fictitious supports of the papal dignity, the famous Decretal Epistles, as they are called, said to have been written by the pontiffs of the primitive times, deserve chiefly to be stigmatized. They were the productions of an obscure writer, who fraudulently prefixed to them the name of Isidore, bishop of Seville. Some of them had appeared in the eighth century; but they were now entirely drawn from their obscurity, and produced, with an air of ostentation and triumph, to demonstrate the supremacy of the Roman pontiffs. The decisions of a certain Roman council, which is said to have been held during the pontificate of Silvester, were likely alleged in behalf of the same cause: but this council had never been so much as heard of before the present century; and the accounts now given of it proceeded from the same source with the Decretals, and were equally authentic.

The monastic life was now universally in the highest esteem; and nothing could equal the veneration that was paid to such as devoted themselves to the sacred gloom and indolence of a convent. The Greeks and orientals had been long accustomed to regard the monkish orders and discipline with the greatest



admiration; but it was only since the beginning of the last century that this passion was indulged among the Latins to such an extravagant length. In the present age its boundaries were still further extended: kings, dukes, and counts forgot their true dignity, even the fulfilling with zeal the duties of their high stations; and affected that contempt of the world and its grandeur, which they mistook for magnanimity and real devotion.

After the banishment of Irene, the controversy concerning images was renewed among the Greeks; and was carried on by the contending parties, during the half of this century, with various and uncertain success. The emperor Nicephorus, though he did not abrogate the decrees of the council of Nice, nor order the images to be taken out of the churches, yet deprived the patrons of image-worship of all power to molest or injure their adversaries, and seems upon the whole to have been an enemy to that idolatrous service. But his successor Michael Curopalates, surnamed Rhangabe, pursued very different measures. Feeble and timorous, and dreading the rage of the priests and monks who maintained the cause of images, he favored that cause during his short reign, and persecuted its adversaries with the greatest rancor and cruelty. The scene again changed upon the accession of Leo the Armenian to the empire, who abolished the decrees of the Nicene council, relating to the use and worship of images, in a council assembled at Constantinople in 814; without however enacting any penal laws against their idolatrous worshippers. This moderation, far from satisfying the patriarch Nicephorus, and the other partisans of image-worship, only served to encourage their obstinacy, and to increase their insolence; upon which the emperor removed the haughty prelate from his office, and chastised the fury of several of his adherents with a deserved punishment. His successor Michael, surnamed Balbus, or the Stammerer, was compelled to observe the same conduct, and to depart from the clemency and indulgence which in the beginning of his reign he had discovered towards the worshippers of images, whose idolatry however he was far from approving; the monks in particular excited his indignation by their fanatical rage, and forced him to treat them with particular severity. But the zeal of his son and successor Theophilus, in discouraging idolatry, was still more vehement; for he opposed the worshippers of images with great violence, and went so far as to condemn to death some of the more obstinate supporters of that impetuous faction. Upon the death of Theophilus, which happened in the year 842, the regency was entrusted with the empress Theodora, during her son's minority. This supersti-

tious princess, fatigued with the importunate solicitations of the monks, deluded by their forged miracles, and not a little influenced by their insolent threats, assembled in the same year a council at Constantinople, in which the decrees of the second Nicene council were re-instated in their lost authority, and the Greeks were indulged in their corrupt propensity to image-worship, by a decisive law. Thus, after a controversy which had been protracted during the space of an hundred and ten years, the cause of idolatry triumphed over the dictates of reason and Christianity; the whole east, the Armenians excepted, bowed down before the victorious images; nor did any of the succeeding emperors attempt to recover the Greeks from this superstitious frenzy, or to restrain them in the performance of this puerile worship. The council which was held at Constantinople under Photius, in the year 779, and which is reckoned by the Greeks the eighth general council, added force and vigor to idolatry, by maintaining the sanctity of images, and approving, confirming, and renewing the Nicene decrees. The same council expunged the word *filioque* from the creed.

The triumph of images, notwithstanding the zealous efforts of Roman pontiffs in their favor, was obtained with much more difficulty among the Latins than it had been among the Greeks: for the former still continued to maintain that invaluable, and indeed inalienable, privilege of judging for themselves in religious matters; and was far from being disposed to submit their reason implicitly to the decisions of the pontiff, or to consider any thing as infallible and true which had human authority only for its foundation. Most of the European Christians steered a middle course between the idolaters and the Iconoclasts; between those who were zealous for the worship of images on the one hand, and those who were totally averse to the use of them on the other. They were of opinion, as was already stated, that images might be suffered as the means of aiding the memory of the faithful, and of calling to their remembrance the pious and virtuous actions of the persons they represented; but they detested all thoughts of paying them the smallest degree of religious homage or adoration. Michael Balbus, when he sent, in the year 824, a solemn embassy to Lewis the Meek, to renew and confirm the treaties of friendship and peace which had been concluded between his predecessors in the empire, and Charlemagne, charged his ministers, in a particular manner, to conciliate the king of the Franks to the party of the Iconoclasts, that they might gradually suppress, by their united influence, the worship of images, and thus restore concord and tranquility to the church. Lewis, upon this occasion, assembled a council



at Paris in 824, to examine the proposal of the Grecian emperor; in which it was resolved to adhere to the decrees of the council of Frankfort, which allowed the use of images in the churches; but severely to prohibit treating them with the smallest marks of religious worship. In time, however, the European Christians departed gradually from the observance of this injunction, and fell imperceptibly into a blind submission to the decisions of the Roman pontiff, whose influence and authority grew daily more formidable. Towards the conclusion therefore of this century, the Gallican clergy began to pay a certain degree of religious homage to the sacred images; and their example was followed by the Germans, and other nations.

Notwithstanding this apostacy, the Iconoclasts were not destitute of adherents. among the Latins. The most eminent of these was Claudius, bishop of Turin, by birth a Spaniard, and a disciple of Felix bishop of Urgel. This zealous prelate no sooner obtained the episcopal dignity through the favor of Lewis the Meek, than he began the duties of his function in the year 825, by ordering all images, and even the cross itself, to be cast out of the churches, and committed to the flames. The year following he composed a treatise, in which he not only defended these vehement proceedings, and declared against the use, as well as the worship, of images; but also broached several other opinions that were contrary to the notions of the multitude, and to the prejudices of the times. He denied, among other things, in opposition to the Greeks, that the cross was to be honored with any kind of worship; he treated relics with the utmost contempt, as absolutely destitute of the virtues which were attributed to them; and censured with much freedom and severity the frequent pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and the offerings at the tombs of saints, which produced such immense emoluments to considerable bodies of ecclesiastics. It is not to be supposed that such a stand in defence of liberty and common sense should pass without opposition. Theodomin bishop of Turin, Jonas bishop of Orleans, and some others, attempted to refute him in voluminous answers, and probably not without success in the apprehension of no small portion of their readers.

But of all the controversies which this age produced, the most interesting is that which ended in the total disunion of the Greek and Latin churches. A vindictive and jealous spirit of animosity and contention had for a long time prevailed between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople, and had sometimes manifested itself in positive acts of violence. In this century it arose to an enormous height; and broke forth into a most vio-

lent flame in the year 858, when the learned Photius was chosen patriarch of Constantinople, by the emperor Michal, in the place of Ignatius, whom that prince expelled from his see, and forced into exile. This violent proceeding, though it was justified and applauded by a council assembled at Constantinople, in the year 861, was far from being attended with general approbation. Ignatius appealed from this council to the Roman pontiff Nicholas I. who espoused his interests; and in a council assembled at Rome, in 862, excommunicated Photius, as unlawfully elected; as well as his abettors, for having been concerned in so unrighteous a cause. The new patriarch, however, was so far from being terrified or dejected by this excommunication, that he returned the compliment to the Roman pontiff; and in a council assembled at Constantinople, in the year 866, declared Nicholas unworthy both of the place he held in the church, and also of being admitted to the communion of Christians.

The Roman pontiff alleged a specious pretext for appearing in this contest with so much violence, and exciting such unhappy commotions in the church. This pretext was the innocence of Ignatius, whom, upon an accusation of treason, whether true or false, the emperor had degraded from his patriarchal dignity. This, however, was no more than a pretext; ambition and interest were the true though secret springs which directed the conduct of Nicholas, who would have borne with patience, and even have beheld with indifference, the unjust sufferings of Ignatius, could he but have recovered from the Greeks the provinces of Illyricum, Macedonia, Epirus, Achaia, Thessaly, and Sicily, which the emperor and Photius had removed from the jurisdiction of the Roman see. Before he engaged in the cause of Ignatius, he sent a solemn embassy to Constantinople, to demand the restitution of these provinces; but his demand was rejected with contempt; hence, under pretence of avenging the injuries committed against Ignatius, he indulged without restraint his own private resentment; and thus covered with the mask of justice the fury of disappointed ambition and avarice.

While affairs were in this distracted state, and the flame of controversy was daily becoming more violent, Basilus the Macedonian, who by the murder of his predecessor had enabled himself to seize the imperial throne, calmed at once these tumults, and restored peace to the church, by recalling Ignatius from exile to the high station from which he had been degraded, and by confining Photius in a monastery. This imperial act of authority was solemnly confirmed and approved by a council assembled at Constantinople in the year 869, in which



the legates of the Roman pontiff Adrian II. had considerable influence, and were treated with the highest marks of distinction. The Latins acknowledge this assembly as the eighth œcumenical council; and in it the religious disputes between them and the Greeks were concluded, or silenced and suspended at least. But the controversy concerning the authority of the Roman pontiffs, the limits of their spiritual empire, and particularly their jurisdiction in Bulgaria, still subsisted; nor could all the efforts of papal ambition engage either Ignatius or the emperors to resign Bulgaria, or any other province, to the see of Rome.

Upon the death of Ignatius, which happened in the year 878, the emperor took Photius into favor, and placed him again at the head of the Greek church, in the patriarchal dignity whence he had fallen. This restoration of the degraded patriarch was agreed to by the Roman pontiff John VIII. upon condition, however, that Photius would permit the Bulgarians to come under the jurisdiction of the Roman see. The latter promised to satisfy in this the demands of the pontiff, to which the emperor also appeared to concede; hence it was that John VIII. sent legates to the council held at Constantinople in 879, by whom he declared his approbation of the acts of that assembly, and acknowledged Photius as his brother in Christ. The promises however of the emperor and the patriarch were far from being accomplished; for, after this council, the former probably by the advice, or at least with the consent, of Photius, refused to transfer the province of Bulgaria to the Roman pontiff; and it must be confessed that this refusal was founded upon weighty and important reasons. The pontiff, notwithstanding, was highly irritated at this disappointment, and sent Marinus to Constantinople in the character of legate, to declare that he had changed his mind concerning Photius, and that he entirely approved of the sentence of excommunication which had formerly been issued against him. The legate, upon delivering this disagreeable message, was cast into prison by the emperor, but was afterwards set free; and being raised to the pontificate upon the death of John VIII. recalled the remembrance of this injurious treatment, and levelled a new sentence of condemnation against Photius.

This sentence was treated with contempt by the haughty patriarch. But, about six years after this period, he experienced again the fragility of sublunary grandeur and elevation, by a fall which concluded his prosperous days: for in the year 886, Leo, surnamed the Philosopher, the son and successor of Basilus, deposed him from the patriarchal see, and confined him in an Armenian monastery, where he died in the year 891. The

death of Photius, who was the only author of the schisms that divided the Greeks and Latins, might have been an occasion of removing these unhappy contests, and of restoring peace and concord in the church, if the Roman pontiffs had not been regardless of the demands of equity. as well as the duty of Christian moderation. But they indulged their passions at the expense of sound policy, and would be satisfied with nothing less than the degradation of all the priests and bishops who had been ordained by Photius. The Greeks, on the other hand, were shocked at the arrogance of these unjust pretensions, and refused to submit to them on any conditions. Hence resentment and irritation renewed the spirit of dispute which had been happily declining; religious as well as civil contests were again set on foot; new controversies were added to the old; until the fatal schism took place, which produced a lasting and total separation between the Greek and Latin churches.\*

The several circumstances which attended the gloom of this

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\* The distinguishing tenets of the Greek church are as follow :

1. They disown the authority of the pope, and deny that the church of Rome is the true Catholic church.
2. They do not baptize their children till they are three, four, five, six, ten, nay sometimes eighteen years of age.
3. They insist that the sacrament of the Lord's supper ought to be administered in both kinds; and they give the sacrament to children immediately after baptism.
4. They deny that there is any such place as purgatory, notwithstanding they pray for the dead, that God would have mercy on them at the general judgment.
5. They exclude confirmation, extreme unction, and matrimony out of the seven sacraments.
6. They deny auricular confession to be a divine precept, and say it is only a positive injunction of the church.
7. They pay no religious worship homage to the eucharist.
8. They administer the communion in both kinds to the laity, both in sickness and in health, though they have never applied themselves to their confessors; because they are persuaded that a lively faith is all which is requisite for the worthy receiving of the Lord's supper.
9. They maintain that the Holy Ghost proceeds only from the Father, and not from the Son.
10. They admit of no images in relief, or embossed work; but use paintings, and sculptures in copper and silver.
11. They approve of the marriage of priests, provided they enter into that state before their admission into holy orders.
12. They condemn all fourth marriages.
13. They observe a number of holy days; and keep four fasts in the year more solemn than the rest, of which the fast in Lent, before Easter, is the chief.



century are reducible to the following heads: The preference given to human writings above the scriptures; the domination of the popedom; the accumulation of ceremonies; and the oppression of the godly.

It was now fashionable to explain scripture entirely by the writings of the fathers. No man was permitted with impunity to vary in the least degree from their decisions. The apostolic rules of interpretation, to compare spiritual things with spiritual, was in a manner lost. It was deemed sufficient, that such a renowned doctor had given such an interpretation.—Hence men of learning and industry paid more attention to the fathers, than to the sacred volume, which, through long disuse and neglect, was looked on as obscure and perplexed, and quite unfit for common reading. Even divine truths seemed to derive their authority more from the word of man than of God; and the writings and decrees of men were not treated as witnesses, but usurped the office of judges of divine truth.

The popedom now grew stronger and stronger, and whoever dared to oppose the bishop of Rome, drew upon himself a host of enemies. All who looked for advancement in the church, were attached to Antichrist, very little resistance was consequently made to image worship. Most persons contented themselves with a simple exposition of their creed. Idolatry was now supported by the whole power and influence of the popedom.

The great accumulation of ceremonies, considered absolutely necessary to salvation, drew off the attention of men from Christian piety. The all-important article of justification was nearly smothered in the rubbish; and pastors were so much engrossed with the rites of worship, that they were almost entirely diverted from intellectual improvement.

Men of eminence, both in church and state, partly through superstition, and partly through secular views, suppressed every attempt to reform mankind.

In Asia, Mahometanism still reigned, and scarce a vestige of real godliness appeared in the Eastern church. There image worship was still a subject of debate: but at length, under the patronage of the superstitious empress Theodora, it effectually triumphed.

In this dark season, the absurd tenet of transubstantiation was introduced. John Scotus Erigena, and Rabanus, archbishop of Mentz, two of the most learned men of that age, pleaded the cause of common sense, and opposed this absurd doctrine; but their learning seems to have had very little connexion with godliness; for they joined in opposing the doctrine of grace, concerning which a controversy of some importance was raised.

In France, the views of divine grace were now more and more darkened; and we shall presently find that a zealous advocate for them could not be heard with candor. Ado, archbishop of Vienne, was indefatigable in pressing the truths of salvation. He usually began his sermons with these or similar words: "Hear the eternal truth, which speaks to you in the gospel:" or, "hear Jesus Christ who saith to you." He took particular care of the examination of candidates for orders; and was a very diligent disciplinarian. He was inflexibly vigilant against vice; and, while his own example was an honor to his profession, he enjoined his clergy to apprise him, if they could discover error in his conduct; Nor did king Lothaire find him obsequious to his lusts: for, through Ado's vigorous remonstrances, he was obliged to desist from a design of divorcing his queen. He sympathized with sincere penitents, and was a real friend to the poor, both in a spiritual and temporal sense, and was the founder of many hospitals for their reception.

In England, the decline of godliness was now grievous. A most savage and lawless people invaded this country. The great Alfred was raised to defend his country against them. One of his speeches delivered to his soldiers, before a battle, displays much good sense and a spirit of religion. In this, he told his people, that their sins had given their enemies the advantage; that they ought to reform their own manners to engage the favor of God; that in other respects they had the superiority, Christians were fighting against heathens, and honest men against robbers; that theirs was not a war of ambition or conquest, but of necessary self-defence. In the battle which followed he entirely defeated the Danes.

Alfred took great pains to instruct his subjects in the things of religion, encouraged literature, and founded the University of Oxford. He constantly attended public worship, and from his youth was wont to pray for grace, and to use serious methods to subdue his passions. Through life he appears to have maintained a beautiful consistency of character. There is nothing to excite doubts of the sincerity of his piety. After his decease the mist of ignorance again prevailed in England.

In the year 814, Charlemagne died aged 82. It is scarce worth while to recount the *splendid sins* of this emperor; since his sanguinary ambition and habitual lewdness, too plainly evince his want of Christian principles. He revived the western empire in Germany. He was a great instrument of providence, in extending the pale of the church; and, at the same time, fixed the power of the popedom on the strongest foundations. His labors, also, to revive learning, were very great; but like those of Alfred, they failed of success. His religious



and moral character bears no comparison with that of the English monarch.

About the year 660, a new sect arose in the East: the accounts of which are far more scanty, than a writer of real Church History could wish. Constantine, who dwelt in an obscure town near Samosatia entertained a deacon, who had been a prisoner among the Mahometans, from whom he received the gift of the New Testament in the original language. He improved the deacon's gift, and betook himself to a close study of the sacred oracles, and formed a plan of divinity from the New Testament; Finding St. Paul, the most systematical of all the apostles, he very properly preferred his writings. And it is universally acknowledged that he was in possession of the genuine text.

This sect appear to have taken their name from St. Paul himself. Constantine adopted that of Sylvanus; and his disciples were called Titus, Timothy, Tychius, after the apostle's fellow laborers; and demonstrations of the apostolic churches were given to the congregations formed by their labors in Armenia and Cappadocia. The Paulicians seem to have been perfectly unlike any other denomination of Christians, and to have originated from an heavenly influence, teaching and converting them. And in them is manifested one of those extraordinary effusions of the Divine Spirit, by which the knowledge of Christ and the practice of godliness are kept alive in the world. They cordially received the writings of St. Paul; and from this we may infer that they also did the other parts of the sacred canon. They adhered closely to the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity; were perfectly free from image worship, which more and more pervaded the East; disregarded relics, and all the fashionable equipage of superstition, and were simply scriptural in the use of the sacraments. They knew no other mediator, but the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sylvanus preached with great success. Pontus and Cappadocia, before renowned for Christian piety, were again enlightened through his labors. He and his associates were distinguished from the clergy of that day, by their scriptural names, modest titles, knowledge, activity and holiness. Their congregations were diffused over the provinces of Asia Minor to the west of the Euphrates; six of the principal churches were called by the names of those to whom St. Paul addressed his epistles: and Sylvanus resided in the neighborhood of Colonia in Pontus.

The Greek emperors, at length roused by the growing importance of the sect, began to persecute the Paulicians with the most sanguinary severity; and, under Christian forms and

names, re-acted the scenes of Galerius and Maximin. They ordered them to be capitally punished, and their books, wherever found, to be committed to the flames; also, that if any person was found to have secreted them, he was to be put to death, and his goods to be confiscated. False religion, in all ages, hates the light, and supports itself, not by instruction, but by persecution, while the real truth, as it is in Jesus, *comes in the light* of scripture, and exhibits that light plainly to the world by reading and expounding the sacred volume, whence alone it derives its authority.

The enemies of the Paulicians conducted the persecution against them with singular violence and cruelty. Simeon, a Greek officer clothed with imperial power, came to Colonia, and apprehended Sylvanus and a number of his disciples. Stones were put into the hands of these last, and they were required to kill their pastor, as the price of their forgiveness. A person, named Justus, was the only one of the number who obeyed; and he stoned to death the father of the Paulicians, who had labored among them twenty-seven years. Justus signalized himself still more by betraying the brethren; while Simeon, struck with the evidences of divine grace apparent in the sufferers, embraced the faith which he came to destroy, gave up the world, preached the gospel, and died a martyr. For 150 years, these servants of Christ underwent the horrors of persecution with Christian patience and meekness. If the acts of their martyrdom, their preaching, and their lives, were distinctly recorded, there is no doubt, they would resemble those, whom the church justly reveres as having suffered in behalf of Christ. All this time the power of the Spirit of God was with them; and they practised the precepts of the 13th chapter to the Romans, as well as believed and felt the precious truths contained in the doctrinal chapters of the same epistle. The blood of the martyrs was in this case, as uniformly, the seed of the church: a succession of teachers and congregations arose, and a person named Sergius, who labored among them thirty-three years, is acknowledged, by historians, unfriendly to this sect, to have possessed extraordinary virtue. The persecution had, however, some intermissions, till Theodora, the empress, who had fully established image-worship, exerted herself beyond any of her predecessors against the Paulicians. Her inquisitors ransacked the Lesser Asia, in search of these sectaries, and she is computed to have killed by the gibbet, by fire, and by sword, a hundred thousand persons.

We have brought down the scanty history of this denomination to about the year 845. To undergo a constant scene of persecution with Christian meekness, and to render to God



and to Cæsar their dues, all the time, at once require and evince the strength of real grace. Of this the Paulicians seem to have been possessed till the period just mentioned. They remembered the injunction of Rev. xiii. 10. "He that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword: here is the faith and patience of the saints." Let Christians believe, rejoice in God, patiently suffer, return good for evil, and still obey those whom God hath set over them. These weapons have ever been found too hard for Satan: the power of the gospel has prevailed, and the church has grown exceedingly, whenever they have been faithfully handled. This was the case preeminently with the church in the era of Dioclesian's persecution. She not only outlived the storm, but also, under the conduct of providence, became externally, as well as internally, superior to her enemies.—If the Paulicians had continued to act thus, the consequences would probably have been similar. But faith and patience at length failed. They were gradually betrayed into a secular spirit. About the year 845, they murdered two persecutors, a governor and a bishop. A soldier called Carbeas, who commanded the guards in the imperial armies, that he might revenge his fathers death, who had been slain by the inquisitors, formed a band of Paulicians, who renounced their allegiance to the emperor, negociated with the Mahometan powers, and, by their assistance, endeavored to establish the independency of the sect.

The cruelties and superstitions of Theodora, received the applause of Nicholas, who became pope of Rome in 858. So truly was Antichristian tyranny established! Chrysocheir succeeded Carbeas, and in conjunction with the Mahometans, not only put Michael the son and successor of Theodora to flight, but penetrated into the heart of Asia, and desolated the fairest provinces of the Greeks. In the issue, the conqueror was slain, the Paulician fortress Tophrice was reduced, and the power of the rebels broken, except a number in the mountains, who, by the assistance of the Arabs, preserved an uncomfortable independence. The ferocious actions of the latter Paulicians show, that they had lost the spirit of true religion, and that they had nothing more of the sect than the name. Their schemes of worldly ambition were however frustrated. Political methods of supporting the gospel, often lead the mind away from God for support, and issue in disappointment.

On the whole, we have seen, in general, satisfactory proof of the work of divine grace in Asia Minor, commencing in the latter end of the seventh century, and extended to the former part of the ninth. But where secular politics begin, there the life and simplicity of vital godliness end. When the Pauli-

cians began to rebel against the established government; to return evil for evil, *to mingle among the heathen, the Mahometans*, and to defend their own religion by arms, negotiations and alliances, they ceased to become the **LIGHT OF THE WORLD**, and the salt of the earth. Such they had been for more than 180 years, adorning and exemplifying the real gospel, by a life of faith, hope and charity, and by the preservation of the truth in a patient course of suffering. They looked for true riches and honor in the world to come; and doubtless they are not frustrated in their hope. But, when secular maxims began to prevail among them, they shone for a time, as heroes, and patriots, in the false glare of human praise; but they lost the solidity of true honor, as all have done in all ages, who have descended from the grandeur of real conformity in Christ, and have preferred to that, the low ambition of earthly greatness.

The absolute power of the pope, the worship of images, and the invocation of saints and angels were opposed, in this century, as in the last, by several princes and ecclesiastics. A council at Paris, in 824, rejected the decrees of the second council of Nice, and prohibited image-worship. Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, wrote against the abuse of pictures and images: he maintained that we ought not to worship any image of God, except that, which is God himself, his eternal Son; and, that there is no other mediator between God and man, but Jesus Christ; both God and man.

Claudius, bishop of Turin, pointedly opposed image-worship. On this subject, he speaks in the following terms, "If they, who have quitted the worship of devils, honor the images of saints; they have not forsaken idols they have only changed their names. For whether you paint upon a wall the pictures of St. Peter, or St. Paul, or those of Jupiter, Saturn, or Mercury, they are now neither gods, nor apostles, nor men.—The name and error continue the same. If men must be adored, there would be less absurdity in adoring them when alive, while they are the image of God, than after they are dead, when they only resemble stocks and stones. And if we are not allowed to adore the works of God, much less are we allowed to adore the works of men. If the cross of Christ ought to be adored, because he was nailed to it, for the same reason we ought to adore mangers, because he was laid in one; and swaddling clothes, because he was wrapped in them. We have not been ordered to adore the cross, but to bear it, and to deny ourselves."

The labors of Claudius were not in vain. In his own diocese he checked the growing evil; and the valleys of Piedmont, which belonged to his bishopric, persevered in his opinions in



the ninth and tenth centuries. Whence it appears that the churches of the Waldenses received much increase from his labors.—Claudius stood firm against the false reliefs of a burdened conscience, which the popedom exhibited, and pointed his hearers and readers to the mediation of Jesus Christ, as the sole and all sufficient object of dependance. He insisted largely that man should be justified before God **BY JESTS CHRIST THROUGH FAITH ALONE.**

From the year 823, Claudius wrote against the abominations of the church of Rome, and lived to the year 839.

So far were the decrees of the papacy from being owned as decisive, through Europe.

The subject of predestination and grace had been formerly controverted in the churches of France, with a considerable degree of acuteness and ingenuity, and what is still more pleasing to a Christian mind, with seriousness, candor, and charity. The doctrine of divine grace had been defended and illustrated by the followers of Augustine, and a salutary influence had attended those doctrines on the knowledge, the the spirit, and the lives of Christians. But, as superstition, idolatry, and ignorance increased, the views of Augustine were more and more thrown into the shade, and the case of Gotteschalcus showed that it was now no longer permitted to a divine, to promulgate the sentiments of Augustine with impunity.

Gotteschalcus was born in Germany, and from early life had been a monk devoted to theological inquiries. He entered with much zeal into the sentiments of Augustine.

About the year 846, he left his monastery, and went into Dalmatia, and Parmonia, where he spread the doctrine of Augustine. At his return, he remained some time in Lombardy, and in 847, held a conference with Notingus, bishop of Vienne, concerning predestination. His zeal gave offence to Notingus, who prevailed on Rabanus, the archbishop of Mentz, to undertake the confutation of the novel heresy, as it was now decreed. Rabanus calumniated Gotteschalcus with those monstrous and licentious consequences, with which the doctrines of divine grace have in all ages been aspersed, and from which St. Paul himself was not exempted: and having dressed the sentiments of his adversary in the most odious colors, he found it no hard task to expose him to infamy. The learned monk undertook to defend himself in writing, and proposed the subject to the consideration of the most able men of his time, and, to the great credit and authority of his adversary, he opposed the renowned name of Augustine. Soon after this he was condemned in a synod held at Mentz, where Rabanus observ-

ing that the monk was of the diocese of Soissons, which was subject to Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, sent Gotteschalcus to him, calling him a vagabond, and declaring that he had seduced many persons, who had become less careful for their salvation, since they had learned from him to say, why should I labor for my salvation? If I am predestinated to damnation, I cannot avoid it; and on the contrary, if I am predestinated to salvation, of whatever sins I am guilty, I shall certainly be saved. Hincmar, who entered fully into the views of Rabanus, and, in a council of bishops, examined Gotteschalcus, who still maintained his doctrine with firmness. On this account, the monk was condemned as a heretic, degraded from the priesthood, and ordered to be beaten with rods and imprisoned. He was, however, an injured man; for nothing was proved against him, except his adherence to the sentiments of Augustine, which was still held in estimation by the church. While he was whipped in the presence of Charles and the bishops with great severity, and given to understand that he must cast into the fire with his own hand a writing, in which he made a collection of scripture texts to prove his opinion, being, at length, overpowered by his sufferings, he dropped the book into the flames. After this he was kept a close prisoner in a monastery, where Hincmar still took pains to persuade him to retract his sentiments in vain. The injured pastor maintained, with his last breath, the doctrine for which he suffered, and died in prison in the year 870, and was denied Christian burial. There were, however, men even in that age, who remonstrated loudly against the barbarity, with which he had been treated. Remigius, archbishop of Lyons, distinguished himself among these; and, in a council held at Valence, in the year 855, both Gotteschalcus and his doctrine were vindicated and defended. Two subsequent councils confirmed the decree. The churches of Lyons, Vienne, and Arles, formerly renowned for piety, vigorously supported the same sentiments: and it was apparent, that all relish for the doctrines of grace was not lost in the church: Christ was still precious to many.

In this century, the churches of the East and West, through the pride and ambition of the pontiffs of Rome and Constantinople, began to be separated from one another, and were never afterwards united. Both the East and the West were, indeed, full of idolatry and darkness, and seemed to vie with each other in supporting the kingdom of Satan. Providence, however, made use of the ambitious spirit of the prelates for the more extensive spread of the gospel. In this chapter, all the information upon this subject is collected which could be extracted from an enormous mass of rubbish; and also some evidences



are presented of the progress of the good work among the nations which had been, in part, evangelized in the two last centuries.

Constantine, afterwards called Cyril, was born at Thessalonica, and was educated at Constantinople. He became one of the most active and useful missionaries of this century. To him providence opened a door of solid utility among the idolatrous nations.

The sister of Bogoris, king of the Bulgarians, a savage and barbarous people, having been taken captive in a military excursion, was brought to Constantinople, and there received christianity. Upon her return to her own country, she gave evidence that her change had been more than nominal. Seeing her brother, the king, enslaved to idolatry, she was struck with grief and compassion, and used the most cogent arguments in her power, to convince him of the vanity of his worship. Bogoris was affected with her arguments, but was not prevailed on to receive the gospel, till a famine and plague appearing in Bulgaria, she persuaded him to pray to the God of the Christians. He did so, and the plague ceased. There was something so remarkable in the event, that Bogoris was induced to send to Constantinople for missionaries; and at length he, with many other people, received baptism. Cyril and his devout brother Methodius were the instruments of these blessings to the Bulgarians. Bogoris had desired Methodius to draw him a picture. Methodius chose for his subject the last judgment, and explained it. This is supposed to have induced the king to embrace christianity. The event happened about the year 861. Pope Nicholas, to extend his own influence, sent bishops among the Bulgarians, who preached and baptised throughout the country; and Bogoris despatched his son with many lords to Rome, and entreated the pope to send pastors into Bulgaria. The word of God and the name of Christ were hereby introduced among them. These transactions took place about the year 866.

About the same time, Cyril and his brother Methodius labored also on the banks of the Danube, among the Sclavonians and the Chazari. The Cham and the whole nation were baptized; and Cyril gave a noble proof of his disinterestedness in refusing those presents which the munificence of the prince would have heaped upon him. Among the Chazavi he taught christianity with great success. Finding this people without letters, he invented an alphabet for their use, and translated the sacred books into the Sclavonian language.

After this, at the request of Bartilas, prince of Moravia, Cyril and Methodius went into that country, carried with them

the Sclavonian gospel, taught the children the letters they had invented, and instructed the people four years and a half. The king of Moravia was baptized with many of his subjects. —Cyril died a monk: Methodius was consecrated bishop of Moravia. The Sclavonian tongue, invented by those two missionaries, is to this day used in the liturgy of the Moravians. Bogoris, king of Bulgaria, gave up his crown about the year 880, and retired into a monastery. Methodius, after a long course of labors, died at an advanced age.

It appears that the Russians, hitherto barbarous and savage, about this time received a Christian bishop and listened to his instruction. About the year 867, certain provinces of Dalmatia sent an embassy to Constantinople, to request Christian teachers to be sent among them. Their request was granted, and the pale of the church was extended through those provinces,

Frederic, nephew to Boniface, the apostle of Germany, was appointed bishop of Utrecht. While dining with the emperor, Lewis the Meek, he was by him exhorted to discharge the duties of his office with faithfulness and integrity. The bishop, pointing to a fish on the table, asked whether it was proper to take hold of it by the head or by the tail. "By the head, to be sure," replied the emperor. "Then I must begin my career of faithfulness," answered Frederic, "with your majesty." He proceeded to rebuke the emperor for an incestuous connexion, which he openly maintained with Judith the empress; and, in the spirit of John the Baptist, told him, "that it was not lawful for him to have her." Lewis had not expected this salutation; and like Herod was not disposed to give up his Herodias. No sooner did the empress hear of this rebuke, than, in the true temper of an incensed adultress, she began to plot the destruction of Frederic; and by the help of assassins, at last affected it. Frederic being mortally wounded, insisted that no blood should be shed on his account, and died in the spirit of martyrdom worthy of the relations of Boniface. In him the Hollanders lost a faithful prelate. He was murdered about the year 833.

Let us now look to the north of Europe, and see, by what gradations divine providence paved the way for the propagation of the gospel in the frozen regions of Scandinavia, and on the shores of the Baltic, which had hitherto been enveloped in the most deplorable darkness of paganism.

Adelard, cousin german to Charlemagne, was a bright luminary in the Christian world at the beginning of this century. He had been invited to the court in his youth: but fearing the infection of such a mode of life, had retired; and at the age



of twenty years, became a monk of Corbie, in Picardy, and was chosen abbot of the monastery. His imperial relation, however, forced him again to attend the court, where he still preserved the disposition of a recluse, and took every opportunity, which business allowed, for private prayer and meditation. After the death of Charlemagne, he was, on unjust suspicions, banished by Lewis the Meek, to a monastery on the coast of Aquitain, in the isle of Here. After a banishment of five years, Lewis became sensible of his own injustice, and not only recalled him, but heaped on him the highest honors. The monk was the same man in prosperity and adversity, and in 823 obtained leave to return to Corbie. Here he labored abundantly, not only for the spiritual good of the monastery, but also for that of the country in its vicinity. Another Adelard, who had governed the monastery during his absence, by the direction of the first Adelard, prepared the foundation of a distinct monastery, called New Corbie, near Paderborn, beside the Weser, as a nursery for evangelical laborers, who should instruct the northern nations. The first Adelard completed the scheme, went twice to New Corbie, and settled its discipline. The success of this truly charitable institution was great: many learned and zealous missionaries were furnished from the new seminary; and it became a light to the north of Europe.

Adelard promoted learning in his monasteries, instructed the people both in Latin and French; and, after his second return from Germany to Old Corbie, died in 827, aged 73. Such is the account given us of Adelard. He appears to have been eminently pious, and the fruits of his labors to have been greater after his death than during his life. To convert monasteries into seminaries of pastoral education, was a thought far above the taste of the age in which he lived, and tended to emancipate those superstitious institutions from the unprofitable and illiberal bondage in which they had been held for many generations.

In the year 814, Harold, king of Denmark, having been expelled from his dominions, implored the protection of the emperor Lewis, the son and successor of Charlemagne. That prince persuaded him to receive Christian baptism: and foreseeing that Harold's reception of christianity would increase the difficulty of his restoration, he gave him a district in Frieze-land for his present maintenance. Lewis, dismissing Harold to his own country, inquired after some pious person who might accompany him, and confirm both the king and his attendants. But it was not easy to find a man disposed to undertake such a journey. At length Valla, abbot of Old Corbie, who had succeeded his brother Adelard, whose history has just been re-

lated, said to the emperor, "I have in my monastery, a monk, who earnestly wishes to suffer for the sake of Christ; a man of understanding and integrity, and peculiarly fitted for such a work. But I cannot promise that he will undertake the journey." The emperor ordered him to send for the man; his name was Anscarius.—When the nature of the employment was opened to the monk, he professed his readiness to go. "I by no means command you," said Vala, "to enter on so difficult and dangerous a service; I leave it to your option." Anscarius, however, persisted in his resolution. It was matter of surprise to many, that he should choose to expose himself among strangers, barbarians and pagans. While preparations were making for his departure, Anscarius gave himself up to reading and prayer. This excellent monk had been employed as a teacher, both in Old and New Corbie, and had distinguished himself by his talents and virtues. Aubert, a monk of noble birth, a great confidant of Vala, and steward of his house, offered himself as a companion to Anscarius. Harold, with these, proceeded on his journey; but neither he nor his attendants, rude and barbarous in their manners, were at all solicitous for the accommodations of the missionaries, who therefore suffered much in the beginning of their journey. When they arrived at Cologne, Hadebald, the Archbishop, commiserating their condition, gave them a bark, in which they might convey their effects.—Harold, struck with the convenience of the accommodation, entered into the vessel with the missionaries, and they went down the Rhine into the sea, and came to the frontier of Denmark. But Harold finding access to his dominions impossible, because of the power of those who had usurped the sovereignty, remained in Friezeland, in the district assigned to him by the emperor.

The king of Denmark seems to have been appointed by divine providence, only as an instrument to introduce Anscarius into the mission. For little more is known of him. The two French missionaries labored with zeal and success in Friezeland, both among christians and pagans. Harold sent some of his own slaves to be taught by them; and, in a little time, they had twelve children in the school.—Above two years they labored, and were made instruments of good to souls: after this Aubert ended his days by disease.

About the year 829, many Swedes having expressed a desire to be instructed in christianity, Anscarius received a commission from the emperor Lewis to visit Sweden. Another monk of Old Corbie, Vitmar by name, was assigned as his companion; and a pastor was left to attend on king Harold, in the room of Anscarius. In the passage, the two missionaries were



met by pirates, who took the ship and all its effects. On this occasion Anscarius lost the emperor's presents, and forty volumes, which he had collected for the use of the ministry. But his mind was still determined; and he and his partner, having with difficulty got to land, gave themselves up to the directions of providence, and walked on foot a long way, now and then crossing some arms of the sea in boats. Such are the triumphs of faith and love! They arrived at Birca, from the ruins of which Stockholm took its rise, though built at some distance from it. The king of Sweeden received them favorably; and his council unanimously agreed to permit them to remain in the country, and to preach the gospel. Success attended their pious efforts. Many Christian captives in Sweden rejoiced at the opportunity of the communion of saints which was now restored to them; and among others, Herigarius, governor of the city, was baptized. This man erected a church on his own estate, and persevered in the profession and support of the gospel.

After six months, the two missionaries returned; with letters written by the king's own hand, into France, and informed Lewis of their success. The consequence was, that Anscarius was appointed archbishop of Hamburg. This great city being in the neighborhood of Denmark, was henceforth considered the metropolis of all the countries of the Elbe, which embraced christianity. The mission into Denmark, was at the same time attended to; and Gausbert was sent to reside as a bishop in Sweden, where the number of Christians increased.

Anscarius, by order of the emperor Lewis, went to Rome, to receive the confirmation of the new archbishopric of Hamburg. On his return to that city, he gained over many pagans, brought up children in the Christian faith, and redeemed captives, whom he instructed and employed in the ministry. In the year 845, his faith was tried by a severe affliction. Hamburg was besieged, taken and pillaged by the Normans, and he himself escaped with difficulty. On this occasion he lost all his effects; but his mind was so serene, that he was not heard to complain: "The Lord gave," said he, "and the Lord hath taken away." It was no inconsiderable addition to his sufferings, to hear, that Gausbert, whom he had sent into Sweden, was banished through a popular insurrection; in consequence of which, the work of the ministry was for some years at a stand in that country. Anscarius, reduced to great poverty, and deserted by many of his followers, persisted still with unwearied patience, in the exercise of his mission in the north of Europe, till the bishopric of Bremen was conferred upon him.—Hamburg and Bremen were, from that time, considered as united in one diocese. It was not till some pains were taken to overcome his

scruples, that Anscarious could be prevailed on to accept of this provision for his wants.

Sweden and Denmark were, under God, indebted to Anscarious, for the first light of the gospel. It is remarked of this wonderful person, that he never did any thing without first commending himself to God by prayer. It is true he was devoted to the Roman see, but we have no proof of his ever having practised or encouraged image-worship. His labors and those of other missionaries deserve the highest commendations. In the year 865, this apostle of the north was called to his rest. Rembert, his confidant, was appointed bishop of Bremen, by his dying words. Rembert presided over the churches of the north for twenty-three years, and established their discipline and ecclesiastical consistence. He lived not unworthy of the confidence of his predecessor, and died in the year 888, an example of piety.

The reader, it is hoped, has seen in this dark century a clear demonstration, that the church of Christ still existed. He may now behold it sunk to the ultimate point of depression.



## CHAPTER XI.

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### THE TENTH CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—OF  
LEARNING AND LEARNED MEN IN THE TENTH CENTURY.—  
PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN THE TENTH CENTURY.

THIS century abounded in all wickedness, and is remarkable above all others for the scarcity of writers, and men of learning. The vices and crimes of the popes were as deep and as atrocious as language can paint; nor can a reasonable man desire more authentic evidence than that, which the records both of civil and ecclesiastical history afford, concerning the corruption of the whole church. One pleasing circumstance, however, occurs to the mind of a genuine Christian, which is, that all this was predicted. The book of the Revelation may justly be called a prophetic history of these transactions; and the truth of scripture is vindicated by events, of all others, the most disagreeable to a pious mind.

What materials then appear for the History of the real Church? The propagation of the gospel among the pagan nations, and a review of some writers of this century form the principal subjects. But the general description of the situation of the church, can be little else than a very succinct enumeration of the means used to oppose the progress of popery.

The decrees of the council of Frankfort, against image-worship, had still some influence in Germany, France, and England. In the year 909, a council was held at Trosle, a village near Soissons in France, in which they expressed their sentiments of Christian faith and practice, without any mixture of doctrine that was peculiarly popish. Many churches still had the scriptures in the vulgar tongue. The monks took much pains in the island of Great Britain, to erect an independent

dominion on the ruin of the secular clergy. This scheme equally destructive of civil and clerical authority, met with a vigorous, and in a great measure, successful resistance, and the celibacy of the clergy was strongly opposed. The doctrine of transubstantiation was still denied by many, and could not as yet gain a firm and legal establishment in Europe.

The Spirit of God was evidently still with the recent churches of Germany and the North; and France was by no means destitute of men, who feared God and served him in the gospel of his Son.

The church of Rome had sunk to the lowest degradation in morals. She had even lost the appearance of virtue. Christianity, now trampled on by the most worthless prelates, immersed in profaneness and sensuality, called for the healing aid of the civil magistrate. Otho I. emperor of Germany, came to Rome; and by the united powers of the civil and military sword, reduced that capital into some degree of order and decorum. He put an end to the irregular and infamous customs of intruding into the popedom, and confirmed to himself and his successors the right of choosing the supreme pontiff in future. The consequence was, that a greater degree of moral propriety began to prevail in the papacy, though facts evince too plainly, that religious principle was still as much wanting as ever. The effect of Otho's regulation was, that the popes exchanged the vices of the rake and the debauchee, for those of the ambitious politician and the hypocrite; and gradually recovered, by a prudent conduct, the domineering ascendancy, which had been lost by vicious excesses. But this did not begin to take place till the latter end of the eleventh century. The popes were rebuked, condemned, and punished, but the popedom was still revered as much as ever. The Roman prelates, convinced of the necessity of more caution and propriety in the use of their power, recovered by political artifice what they had lost, and in the issue, became more terrible and pernicious than ever.

The efforts of Otho to purify the church, to promote learning, to erect bishoprics, to endow churches, and to propagate the gospel among barbarous nations, were highly laudable. His exertions of this nature were so steady, and his private life so amiable, that there is reason to hope, he was himself a real Christian. His empress was no less remarkable for her zeal and liberality.

In the West, the Normans, and in the East, the Turks, committed the most dreadful outrages on the church. In the island of Great Britain, nothing is found in all this period but igno-



rance, superstition, and the ravages of northern barbarians. The state of France was not much different.

Though God had not utterly forsaken the church yet true religion was now indeed low. Very few are to be found who deserve to be noticed for knowledge or for piety. Bruno, archbishop of Cologne was, however, eminent for both. He was brother to Otho I. and, by the desire of the people of Cologne, was fixed in that archbishopric. Otho invested his relation also with the civil power of a dukedom.—Bruno was a diligent promoter of religion. He brought over to the profession of Christianity, Normans, Danes, and various others, who traveled in his province. The luxury of both clergy and people he restrained, and was himself a shining example of modest and frugal manners. Bruno died about the year 965.

Unni, archbishop of Hamburg, acted with a vigor and piety worthy of his station. It displays no common degree of Christian zeal, that a person so opulent should choose to labor as a missionary in such rude and barbarous countries as Denmark and Sweden. He died at Stockholm in 936.

Adolvard, bishop of Verden, discharged the office of a faithful pastor, and took great pains to instruct the ignorant Vandals in the way of salvation.

Libentius, archbishop of Hamburg, showed himself possessed of the spirit of Unni, his pious predecessor, and often visited the vandals, a barbarous people in Poland, and taught them the truths of the gospel. He sent pastors to distant nations, and was a shining example of piety and beneficence. He died in 1013.

Some other rare lights shone during this dark night, by which the God of grace and mercy called, nourished and sanctified his church, and preserved to himself a godly seed in the earth, who served him in the gospel of his Son, and prevented the cruel tyranny of the prince of darkness from completely overspreading the world.

On the decease of Charlemagne, the Hungarians, who had in his time received some ideas of Christianity, relapsed into the idolatries of their fathers, and the Christian name among them was almost extinguished. But towards the middle of this century, two Hungarian chiefs, whose governments lay on the banks of the Danube, professed christianity and were baptized at Constantinople. Their names were Bologudes and Gylas. The former soon apostatized: the latter persevered, and encouraged the propagation of religion. The effects proved salutary among the Hungarians. The daughter of Gylas having been given in marriage to Geysa, the chief prince of Hungary, prevailed on her husband to receive the gospel. Whether

the king's conversion was real or nominal, the most salutary consequences attended its reception by his subjects.

Humanity, peace, and civilization began to flourish among a people hitherto fierce and barbarous in the extreme. Stephen, the son of Geysa, was baptized, and became a more decisive defender of the faith than his father had been. Under Stephen, Hungary was almost wholly evangelized; and nothing was omitted by this zealous prince to establish christianity throughout his dominions.

Adalbert, archbishop of Prague, who visited Hungary toward the close of this century, was instrumental in aiding the benevolent exertions of this prince to instruct and christianize his subjects. He, too, traveled as a missionary into Poland, and planted the gospel in Dantzic, where his labors appear to have been crowned with success. In visiting a small island, he was knocked down with the oar of a boat; but recovering himself, made his escape, rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and with his fellow laborers quitted the place. Indeed he was forced to flee for his life; but he was at length murdered by barbarians, about the year 997. Siggo, a pagan priest, was the principal instrument of his death. Adalbert was one of the wisest and best of men, whom God raised up for the instruction of the human race; a man willing to labor and to suffer for Christ.

The labors of Gerard, bishop of Toul, in Germany, will also deserve to be mentioned. He was an eminent preacher; and often commissioned zealous pastors to officiate in country parishes. He cultivated learning among his disciples; but at the same time took care, so far as lay in his power, that they should apply themselves to devotion. That he would be very earnest in these pious efforts, will admit of no doubt, if it be true, that he declared, that he found more delight in heavenly exercises during one moment than a worldly soul finds in worldly pleasures for a thousand years.

The church in Denmark now received a severe check from their king Gormo the III., who labored to extirpate the gospel there entirely. But his queen Tyra, who openly professed it, gave it all the support which lay in her power. The influence of the king prevailed, and the most of his subjects returned to idolatry. At length, Henry I. called the Fowler, the predecessor of the great Otho, led an army into Denmark; and through the terror of his arms, obliged Gormo to promise submission to the commands of the emperor. Under the protection of Henry, Unni, archbishop of Hamburg, came with some faithful laborers into Denmark, and brought over many to the profession of divine truth; but Gormo himself remained inflex-



ible. Harold, his son, received the word with respect. The instruction of his mother, Tyra, doubtless had removed all prejudice from his mind. Unni, with the consent of Gormo, visited the islands, and formed Christian churches. The king himself was allowed by this conqueror to choose, whether he would receive christianity himself or not; but he was prohibited from persecuting the faith in his dominions; and thus by a singular concurrence of events, a sovereign prince was, by a foreign power, prevented from committing that evil among his subjects to which his own inclination would have led him. The labors of Unni were highly laudable, and providence smiled on his benevolent exertions to propagate truth and holiness. He visited Sweden and arrived at Birca, where he found that the gospel had become extinct; that for seventy years, no bishop had appeared among them, except Rembert the successor of Anscarius. It pleased God there to give large success to the ministry of Unni. He fixed the gospel in Sweden, and planted it even in the remote parts of that northern region. At length Unni finished his glorious course at Birca, in the year 936. The savage disposition of the princes, and the confusion of the times, had tended to obliterate the traces of Anscarius' labors; But at length, Eric, the eighth king of Sweden, and still more his son and successor, Olaus the second, favored the propagation of the gospel.

Eric requested the archbishop of Bremen to supply his kingdom with missionaries. In compliance with this request Adalvan and Stephen, persons of knowledge, integrity, and piety, were sent to him. They for a time labored with much success; but the natural enmity of the human heart will exert itself against true piety, whatever be the form of government under which men live. The nobles of Sweden being enraged at the restraints laid upon their licentiousness of manners, commenced a religious persecution against both the missionaries and the king. The former were beaten with rods, and expelled from Upsal; the latter was murdered on account of his piety. His son and successor Olous was not, however, discouraged from cherishing christianity, and his zeal and piety were crowned with success.

Thus were Sweden and Denmark, after a variety of changes, reduced into subjection to the form, and, no doubt, many individuals to the power of the gospel. In the latter country, after the death of Henry I. the inhabitants refused to pay tribute to Otho the Great, his successor. This monarch obliged them to submit, and required Harold, the son and successor of Gormo, to receive Christian baptism. All that we know of this prince induces the belief, that there was no reluctance on his part.

He was baptized, together with his wife and little son, whose name had been Lueno; and in honor of the emperor, he was now called Luen-Otho. Harold, during the remainder of his life, took every wise and salutary method to propagate divine truth among his subjects, and to restrain vice and immorality. Nor was it much to be doubted, that he would instruct his son Luen-Otho to act in the same manner, and labor to impress on his mind the power of that divine religion which he himself seems to have felt. Be that as it may, Luen-Otho formed a junction with the chiefs of the country, who were offended at the pious zeal of Harold; in consequence of which the latter was murdered: and Luen-Otho renounced even the name which had been imposed on him, persecuted the christians with great cruelty, and for a time gave a predominancy to the pagan interest in his dominions. It is however remarkable, that like another Manassah in his affliction, Luen-Otho knew that the Lord was God. Being expelled from his throne, and forced to live in exile among the Scots, he was induced to remember the lessons of his childhood; repented of his crimes, and being restored to his throne, like the same Manassah, labored to destroy the idolatry which he had supported, and in the latter part of his life trode in the steps of his father.

In this century the light of the gospel penetrated into Norway. The idol Thor was dragged from its place and publicly burnt in the sight of its worshippers; and this country became Christian, in the form of its religion, throughout. The Orkney Islands, then subject to Norway, also received the light of the gospel. Iceland and Greenland too were visited with the cheering rays of the sun of righteousness. The triumph of christianity was complete throughout all Scandinavia. Poland, hitherto a barbarous country, became nominally christianized; and some in that country were hopefully made the subjects of real christianity. In all the barbarous countries where Christian missionaries were received, their labors were found to be salutary. The dispositions of the barbarians were hereby gradually meliorated, and human society was improved.

Though the efforts of the tenth and three preceding centuries did not always spring from pure motives, yet they formed the principal glory of those times. In many instances those efforts were evidently attended with the effusion of the divine Spirit, and the genuine conversion of many pagans from their heathen vanities, to the love and practice of the truth as it is in Jesus.



## CHAPTER XII.

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### ELEVENTH CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY.

THE genuine church of Christ, under the protection and influence of her Supreme Head, existed in this century; but it would be in vain to attempt a regular and systematical history of her progress. Some particular circumstances in different parts of the Christian world, some pious and successful endeavors to propagate the gospel in pagan countries, some degrees of opposition to the reigning idolatry and superstition, and some writings of pious and evangelical theologians, demonstrated that the spirit of God had not entirely forsaken the earth.

If this century excelled the last, it was in the improvements of learning: The arts and sciences revived, in a measure; among the clergy and the monks, but were not cultivated by any other set of men. I speak in regard to the western church; for the eastern, enfeebled and oppressed by the Turks and Saracens from without, and by civil broils and factions from within, with difficulty preserved that degree of knowledge, which in those degenerate days, still remained among the Greeks. I scarce find any vestiges of piety among the eastern Christians at this time. So fatal was the influence of Mahometanism, and so judicially hardened were the descendants of those who first had honored the religion of Jesus. Constantinople was still called a Christian city, and in learning and politeness, was superior to any part of the west: but it is in Europe we are to look for the emanations of piety. France and Italy excelled particularly in the cultivation of learning. Robert, king of France, the son and successor of Hugh Capet, who began to reign in 996, and died in 1031, distinguished himself as the friend of science. Even the ferocious Normans, whose wars

and devastations were so terrible in Italy, France, and England, after they had established their respective governments, applied themselves to the cultivation of the human mind, and diffused some light among the people whom they had subdued. This was particularly the case with the southern parts of Italy and with Great Britain. William the conqueror, savage and imperious as he was, restored letters in England, which amidst the Danish depredations, had been almost extinguished. The learning itself was not philosophical, like that of modern times, but consisted chiefly of grammar, rhetoric, and logic. This was connected with divinity. The scriptures were held in high reputation. In such circumstances, to have learned to read, to have attended to the meaning of words, and to have employed the powers of the human mind, in any manner, on sacred writings, were great blessings to mankind. In Italy and France there remained some witnesses of divine truth, who opposed the abominations of the popedom.

Popery now reigned triumphant, and no public profession of the gospel, who claimed independence of its domination, could be endured in Europe.—The Saracens were then masters of Africa, and persecuted the Christians there with great bitterness. The African Christians were so infatuated with the love of sin, that they quarreled among themselves, and they then had but two bishops, they betrayed one of these into the hands of the infidels, who greatly abused him.

He who seriously reflects with what glory Asia and Africa once shone before God and his Christ; how dark and idolatrous, and at the same time, how insensible of his spiritual misery, the inhabitants of those two quarters of the globe were in this century, and continue even to the present times, will see with what reverential care the jewel of the gospel should be cherished, while in our possession, lest we not only lose our own souls, but entail a curse on ages yet unborn.

In the year 1017, certain persons, real or supposed heretics, were discovered in France, who were said to hold, "that they did believe that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary; that he died for the salvation of mankind; that he was buried and rose again; that baptism procured the remission of sins; that the consecration by the priest constituted the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ; and that it was profitable to pray to the martyrs and confessors." Other matters of a detestable nature were ascribed to them. On their refusal to recant before a council held at Orleans, thirteen of them were burnt alive. It is not easy to say, what was the true character of these men. It is certain, that they opposed the reigning superstitions, and that they were willing to suffer for the doctrines



which they espoused. The crimes alledged against them were so monstrous and incredible, as to render the charges adduced against their doctrines very suspicious. That they, however, were truly evangelicel christians, is what we dare not affirm.

In Flanders, some time after, there appeared another sect, which was condemned by a synod held at Arras, in the year 1025, by Gerard, bishop of Camcray and Arras. Concerning these Gerard writes, that they traveled up and down to multiply converts, and that they had withdrawn many from the belief of the real presence in the sacrament; that they owned themselves to be the scholars of Gundulphus, who had instructed them in the evangelical and apostolical doctrine.—“This,” said they, “is our doctrine, to renounce the world, to bridle the lusts of the flesh, to maintain ourselves by the labor of our own hands, to do violence to no man, and to love the brethren. If this plan of righteousness be observed, there is no need of baptism; if it be neglected, baptism is of no avail.” They particularly objected to the baptism of infants, because they were altogether incapable of understanding or confessing the truth, They denied the real presence of Christ’s body in the Lord’s Supper; they rejected the consecration of churches, opposed various reigning superstitions, particularly the doctrine of purgatory and the practices connected with it. They likewise refused to worship the cross or any images whatever. Gerard having examined their supposed errors, and, in his opinion, confuted them, drew up a confession of faith, contrary to those errors, which he required the heretics to sign. As they did not well understand the Latin, he caused the confession to be explained to them in the vulgar tongue, by an interpreter, then, according to this account, they approved and signed the instrument, and were dismissed in peace by the bishop.

The nature of mankind, ever prone to run from one extreme to another, will easily account for the rejection of infant baptism. The practice had long been sullied by superstitious fooleries: the transition of its total rejection was natural. It does not appear that they denied the use of the Lord’s Supper, but only the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the elements, and it is probable that they held baptism also in a similar manner. It cannot be doubted, but that, on the whole, they were of the true church of Christ. Faithfully to withstand idolatry and the reigning corruptions, required a light and strength far above nature; and they appear to have been raised up to bear witness for the truth in that dark night of papal abominations.

During the reign of Ethelred, in England, a very cruel massacre of the Danes was, by royal order, made throughout his

dominions. In this, no distinction was observed between the innocent and the guilty. Swein, king of Denmark, revenged this massacre, by repeated devastations and heavy exactions. Ethelred fled to Normandy to save his life, while his subjects felt all the miseries, which might be expected from incensed and victorious barbarians. During these miseries, Alphage, archbishop of Canterbury, fell into the hands of the Danes. He firmly expostulated with the infuriated barbarians, who exercised the most horrid cruelties, particularly on ladies of quality, whom they dragged to the stake and burnt to death, and who did not spare even infants. "The cradle," says he, "can afford no triumph to soldiers. It would be better for you to exercise your vengeance on me, whose death may give celebrity to your names. Remember, that some of your troops have, through my means, been brought over to the faith of Christ, and I have frequently rebuked you for your acts of injustice." Exasperated at these words, the Danes kept him a prisoner for seven months.—They then offered him his liberty on condition of immense payments to be made by himself and Ethelred the king. Alphage told them the sums were too large to be raised by any exactions, and firmly refused to drain the treasures of the church, for the sake of saving his life; accounting it wrong to give to pagans those sums which had been devoted to the honor of religion, and the relief of the poor. The merciless Danes, enraged beyond measure, threw him down and stoned him, while he prayed for his enemies, and for the church. None but a Christian spirit could have conducted Alphage through such a scene, and supported him with so much fortitude and charity. He was murdered in the year 1013.

In the year 1017, the Danes brought the English into complete subjection. In 1041 the English threw off the Danish yoke; but soon sunk under the power of William the Norman, who in the year 1066, beheld himself sovereign of England.

Under William, the papal power soon reached the same height in England, which it had attained in France and Italy. This the tyrant found to be a convenient support of his own despotic power: and while he took care that every one of his subjects should, in ecclesiastical matters, bow under the yoke of the bishop of Rome, he reserved to himself the supreme dominion of civil affairs, and exercised it with the most unqualified rigor. Lanfrano, whom he appointed archbishop of Canterbury, zealously supported the power of Rome, and the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation by his influence and authority. His successor, Anselm, was no less devoted to the pope, and maintained several famous contests with his sovereign William



Rufus, the son and successor of the conqueror. Anselm contributed much, by his influence, to settle the celibacy of the clergy of England; and it must be confessed, that even the virtues of this great man, through the peculiar infelicity of the times, were attended with great disadvantages to society. As to superstitious observances, his example had influence on others, and was injurious: his zeal, however, against luxury, simony and the vices of the great, was laudable, and his general defence of evangelical truth, adorned by an upright life and conversation, preserved, under God, some genuine remains of piety in the nation.

The work of Christian piety, which had been successfully carried on in Hungary, was now crowned with still greater prosperity. Stephen, the king, who had began to reign in the year 997, showed himself a zealous patron of the gospel. His zeal was indeed much stimulated by his pious queen. He often accompanied the preachers and pathetically exhorted his subjects. He suppressed barbarous customs, and restrained blasphemy, theft, adultery, and murder.—The whole moral conduct of Stephen was admirable. His excellent code of laws is, to this day, the basis of the laws of Hungary. In this he forbids all impiety, the violation of the duties of the Lord's Day, and irreverent behaviour in the house of God. He lived to see all Hungary become externally Christian; but christianity existed there, adulterated, or clouded by papal domination, and by the fashionable superstitions. Stephen died in the year 1038.

He was succeeded by Peter his nephew, who was banished by his subjects. Andrew, the cousin of Stephen, was now appointed king, on condition of restoring idolatry. Gerard and three other bishops endeavored to divert him from the design. But they were assaulted on the road by duke Vathas, a zealous pagan. Andrew coming to the spot rescued one of the bishops, the other three had already fallen by the arm of the barbarian. This atrocious villany appears to have been overruled by Him, who causes the wrath of man to praise him for the good of the church. The heart of Andrew was moved; he had seen in this instances the criminality of a believer in paganism. He examined christianity, received it, repressed idolatry, and reigned successfully.

The triumphs of the gospel in Denmark were very conspicuous. It was the preaching of the cross, attended with the energy of the Holy Spirit, which then effected a mighty revolution in the hearts of the Danes; a revolution which, by the fruits it has produced has manifested itself to have been in favor of humanity. It is remarkable, that to this day, no nation,

in proportion to its abilities and opportunities, has exceeded the Danes in labors for the propagation of the gospel. Christian godliness has the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come. While it conducts enslaved souls into liberty, and turns them from the power of Satan to God, it invests them with the garments of salvation, meliorates their condition in this life, and diffuses through the world the most salutary precepts of peace, order, and tranquility. Let not men expect the general civilization of the world by any other methods. Our Saviour has most fitly directed us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest; and every one who feels the genuine spirit of the gospel will devoutly obey the injunction.



## CHAPTER XIII.

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### THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—OF  
LEARNING AND LEARNED MEN IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY.  
—PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

SUPERSTITION, idolatry, frivolous contentions, and metaphysical niceties, attended with a lamentable want of true piety and virtue, form almost the whole of the religious phenomena in the East.

Just at the close of the last century, pope Urban held a synod of one hundred and fifty bishops, to promote the crusades, and exhorted the Christian world to concur in supporting the same cause. He died in the year 1099, and Jerusalem was taken by the crusaders in the same year. The pale of the visible church was extended, by the conquests of the western warriors, and several episcopal sees were again formed in regions, whence the light of the gospel had first arisen to bless mankind. But these were of short duration; and what is much more material to be observed, while they continued, gave no discernable evidence of the spirit of true religion. This is a circumstance which throws a very unpleasant shade on the whole character of the fanatical war, which at that time agitated both Europe and Asia. Among its thousand evils, this was one, *indulgencies were now diffused by the popes through Europe*, for the purpose of promoting what they called the holy war. These had indeed been sold before by the inferior dignitaries of the church, who, for money, remitted the penalties imposed on transgressors; they are not, however, pretended to abolish the punishments which await the wicked in a future state. This impiety was reserved to the pope himself, who dared to usurp the authority which belongs to God alone. The corruption having once taken place, remained and increased from age to age, till

it was checked by the reformation. The whole discipline of the church was now dissolved, and men, who had means to purchase a license to sin, were emboldened to let loose the reins of vice, and to follow at large their own desires and imaginations.

In this season of religious declension, attempts were, however, made to promote human learning; indeed, the laudable passion for intellectual improvement was strong in this century. The human mind acquired a new tone and vigor; but learning could not communicate grace, nor bring men to see the folly of enslaving themselves to the popedom. The influence of the bishop of Rome became prodigious; the emperors of Germany trembled under the rod; and some of the bravest and wisest of the English princes were found unequal to a contest with the hierarchy.

Where THEN was the church of Christ, and what was its condition? In the general appearance of national religion, she was not to be discovered. God had, however, his SECRET ONES. In the West the Cathari appear then to have lived the religion of Jesus. They formed societies among themselves. These increased exceedingly, and towards the close of the century, were exposed to the unrighteous indignation of the reigning powers, both in church and state, and were known by the name of Waldenses. Thus the church of Christ had a real existence in the West, and shone as a light in a dark place. In the East it is extremely difficult to discover the least vestiges of genuine piety, unless it be in some small degrees of it among the Paulicians.

In a council held at London, in 1108, a decree was issued against clerks, who should cohabit with women. This council did not, however, mean to give an attention to the truth of the prophecy of St. Paul, concerning the apostacy of the latter days, one circumstance of which was the prohibition of marriage, but they fulfilled the prophecy in the clearest manner. The voice of natural conscience and of common sense, was by no means altogether silenced during this gloomy season. Fluentius, bishop of Florence, taught publicly that Antichrist was born, and came into the world. On account of this, pope Paschal II. held a council there in the year 1105, reprimanded the bishop, and enjoined him to be silent on the subject.

The Island of Great Britain was rapidly sinking in this century, into a deplorable state of subjection to the Roman see. In the year 1159, thirty men and women, who were Germans, appeared in England, and were afterward brought before a council of the clergy at Oxford. Gerárd their teacher, a man of learning, said, that they were Christians, and believed the



doctrine of the apostles. They expressed an abhorrence of the doctrine of purgatory, of prayers for the dead, and of the invocation of the saints. Henry II., in conjunction with the council, ordered them to be branded with a hot iron on the forehead to be whipped through Oxford, and to have their clothes cut short by the girdles, and to be turned into the open fields; and no person to shelter or relieve them, under severe penalties. It was then the depth of winter, and they all lost their lives by cold and hunger. They had made one female convert in England, who, through fear of similar punishment, recanted. The whole number of the Germans remained patient, serene, composed, repeating, "Blessed are those, who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Their teacher, Gerard, that he might be distinguished from the rest, had an additional mark on his chin.

What darkness must at that time have filled the island of Great Britain! A wise and sagacious king, a renowned university, the whole body of the clergy and laity, all united in expelling Christ from their coast! This account, though brief, is sufficiently explicit to show that these were the martyrs of Christ. Most probably driven from home by persecution, they had brought the light and power of the gospel into England with them; and so totally corrupt and senseless was the nation, that none received it. It deserves to be noticed, that England was afterward, for a long time, exposed to suffer more severely, than most other nations, from the exactions of the popedom.

Antichrist then reigned calm and victorious throughout Europe. Nevertheless, even in Italy itself, some suspicions of his existence appeared. Joachim, abbot of Calabria, a man renowned for learning and piety, asserted that Antichrist was born in the Roman state, and would be exalted to the apostolic see. King Richard I. of England, being at Messina in Sicily, going upon his expedition to the holy land, sent for Joachim, and with much satisfaction heard him explain the book of the Revelation, and discourse of Antichrist.

If Richard had been as earnest in studying the scriptures, as he was in conducting his romantic expedition into the holy land, by comparing the apocalyptic prophecies with the treatment which he himself received from the pope, he might have understood that the bishop of Rome was Antichrist. For in a bull dated 1197, Innocent III. declared, that it was not fit that any man should be invested with authority who did not revere and obey the holy see. In another bull, addressed to Richard, he told him, that if he opposed the decrees of the apostolic see, he would soon convince him, how hard it was to kick against the pricks. In another bull Innocent declared, that he would

not endure the least contempt of himself, or of God, whose place he held on earth, but would punish every disobedience without delay, and without respect of persons; and would convince the whole world, that he was determined to act like a sovereign. The "lion-hearted" Richard obeyed his decrees, and gave up his opposition in the cause which he had contested. Innocent reigned in England with a power little less than despotic. This was the pope who confirmed the doctrine of transubstantiation in the grossest sense; reduced the two succeeding princes, John and Henry III. to a state of the lowest vassalage, and enriched his creatures with the treasures of England.

At the entrance of this century, we find Bernard, abbot of Clairval, rising with splendor, amid the general gloom. Though he was an ardent champion for the office and personal characters of the popes of Rome, yet he inveighed against the vices of the men, and the various evils of their ecclesiastical administration.—He strenuously supported their pretensions to St. Peter's chair, and combatted all who opposed those claims. *Forgive him this wrong*: it was common to him with the Christian world!

At this time the Mahometans were aiming at universal empire, and according to the Koran, all who were not with them in their creed, were continually threatened with the loss of their religion and their liberties; and to live in slavery, under the Mahometan yoke, was all the indulgence granted to Christians, who sunk beneath their arms. And as at this time, superstition had led many, under the semblage of religion, to undertake pilgrimages to the holy land, who were exposed to many insults, robberies, and extortions, from the Mahometans; so, in the beginning of this century, prodigious armies marched out of Europe to wrest the holy land out of the hands of the infidels, and Bernard used his utmost influence to encourage and promote this ill timed enterprise.

Early in life, Bernard subjected himself to the severest austerities, by which he, at length, was reduced to great weakness, and his health much impaired. But inwardly taught of God, as he advanced in the divine life, he gradually learned to correct the harshness and asperity of his sentiments. He was humbled under a sense of his folly, and frankly confessed it in the strongest terms. He then began to travel from place to place, and to preach for the good of mankind. And it is wonderful to observe, with what authority he reigned in the hearts of men of all ranks, and how his word became a law to princes and nobles. His eloquence was, indeed, very great; but that alone could never have given him so extensive a dominion. His sincerity and humility were eminent, and his constant refusal of



the least ecclesiastical dignities, gave an unequivocal testimony to the uprightness of his character. Though no potentate, civil or ecclesiastical, possessed such real power as he did, in the Christian world; and though he was the highest in the judgment of all men, yet was he, in his own estimation, the lowest. He said and felt what he said, that for the performance of the services for which he was so much extolled, he was wholly indebted to the influence of divine grace. The talents of Bernard in preaching, were doubtless of the first order. He possessed that variety of gifts, which fitted him either to address the great or the vulgar.

Peter Abelard was born in Brittany, in the year 1079. He was a man of genius, industry and learning; by nature, confident and presumptuous, elated with applause, and far too haughty to submit to the simple truth, as it is revealed in scripture: from that moment that he applied himself to the study of the sacred writings, he was ardently disposed to heretical singularities. He advocated certain sentiments, subversive of the truth as it is in Jesus, and which were calculated to foster the pride and self-sufficiency of the human heart. Bernard took the most active and effectual measures to counteract his errors, and to support the soul humbling doctrines of the cross; and at length, after much exertions, procured the definitive sentence of the pope against Abelard, who ordered his books to be burned, and the heretic himself to be confined in a monastery. He was permitted to end his days in that of Cluni, over which Peter the venerable presided, who treated him with much compassion and friendship. Not personal malice, but Christian zeal seems to have influenced Bernard in the whole of this transaction.

In this century there were numerous opposers of the reigning idolatry and superstitions of the church of Rome, who were denominated by their enemies Cathari; they, as to worldly property, were in low circumstances, and in general, mechanics. Cologne, Flanders, the South of France, Savoy, and Milan, were their principal places of residence. These appear to have been a plain, unassuming, harmless, and industrious sect of Christians, condemning, by their doctrine and manners, the whole apparatus of the detestable idolatry and superstition, placing true religion in the faith and love of Christ, and retaining a superior respect for the divine world. They seem to have conformed to the public worship, much in the same manner as the apostles did to the Jewish church, while it existed, still preserving a union among themselves in worship, and in hearing sermons, so far as the iniquity of the times would permit.

This people continued in a state of extreme persecution throughout this century. Bernard, who seems to have been extremely ill informed concerning them, remarks, that they had no particular father of their heresy, and condemns them in whatever respects they stood opposed to the high claims and superstitions of the church of Rome. We cannot, however, find that he ever opposed their real piety.

Bernard lived in an age so ignorant and superstitious, that Protestants are ready to ask, can any good come out of the twelfth century? His writings show him to have been a man of humble and fervent piety. True, he censured some, "of whom the world was not worthy," but of their true character he was ignorant. He was deeply tinged with a predilection for the Roman hierarchy; had imbibed most of those errors of his time, which were not subversive of the gospel; and the monastic character, which, according to the spirit of the age, appeared to be the greatest glory, seems to have much eclipsed his real virtues, and to have prevented his progress in true evangelical wisdom. But with all his faults, the real Christian shines forth in Bernard's life and death. The love of God seems to have taken deep root in his soul, and to have been always steady and ardent. He was about sixty-three years old when he died, of a disease in his stomach. A letter which he dictated to a friend, a very few days before his disease, will be worthy of our attention, as a genuine monument of that simplicity, modesty, and piety, which had adorned his conversation. "I received your love with affection, I cannot say with pleasure; for what pleasure can there be to a person in my circumstances, replete with bitterness? To eat nothing solid is the only way to preserve myself tolerably easy. My sensitive powers admit of no further pleasure. Sleep had departed from my eyes, and prevented the least intermission of my pain. Stomachic weakness is, as it were, the sum total of my afflictions. By day and night I receive a small portion of liquids. Every thing solid the stomach rejects.—The very scanty supply which I now and then receive is painful; but perfect emptiness would be more so. If now and then I take in a large quantity, the effect is most distressing. My legs and feet are swollen as in a dropsy. In the midst of these affliction, that I may hide nothing from an anxious friend, in my inner man, (I speak as a vulgar person,) the spirit is ready, though the flesh is weak. Pray ye to the Saviour, who willeth not the death of a sinner, that he would not delay my timely exit, but that still he would guard it. Fortify with your prayers a poor unworthy creature, that the enemy who lies in wait, may find no place where he may fix his tooth and inflict a wound. These words have I dictated,



but in such a manner, that ye know my affection by a hand well known to you." Such were the condition and temper of this excellent saint at the approach of death.—Thus may we hope that Bernard, through faith and patience, did at length inherit the promises.

The pale of the visible church was still further extended in this century among the idolatrous nations; and though the methods of propagating divine truth were too often unchristian, some missionaries seem to have been actuated by an apostolical spirit. The articles under this head are few, but well deserve the reader's attention.

Boleslaus, duke of Poland, having taken Stetin, the capital of Pomerania, by storm, and laid waste the country by fire and sword, compelled the remaining inhabitants to submit at discretion. From these inauspicious beginnings Pomerania was made acquainted with Christianity. For three years the conqueror endeavored to procure pastors and teachers from his own dominions, to instruct his new subjects; but could find none. He then engaged Otho, bishop of Bamberg, in the work. The duke of Pomerania met the bishop on his approach, and received him with much respect. The savage inhabitants were, however, with difficulty prevented from murdering him. Otho was firm, and by Christian zeal, patience, and meekness, labored to efface the disadvantageous impressions, which the military expeditions of Boleslaus, could not fail to have made on their minds. The duchess of Pomerania, with her female attendants, received the gospel: so did the duke with his companions, and he gave this evidence of sincerity, that he was prevailed on by the instructions of Otho to dismiss his concubines, who were twenty-four in number. This missionary was afterward fiercely assaulted by some of the inhabitants, and with great difficulty escaped. Otho bore the injury so meekly, and persevered in his labors with such evident marks of probity and charity, that he at length established the form of christianity among them. He commenced his mission in the year 1123, and from his success, was styled the apostle of the Pomeranians. After he had carried the gospel to the remote districts, he returned to the care of his own flock at Bamberg, where he died in 1139. That the work, however, was very slight among this people, appeared too plainly by the event. The Pomeranians soon after ejected the Christian pastors, and re-established the idolatry of their ancestors.

The inhabitants of Rugen, an island which lies in the neighborhood of Pomerania, were remarkable for their obstinate opposition to christianity. Eric, king of Denmark, subdued them; and, among other conditions of peace, imposed on them his

religion. But they soon renounced it for their ancient idolatry. At length Waldemar, king of Denmark, having subjected them again, obliged them to deliver up to him their idol Swanter-with, which he ordered to be hewn in pieces and burned. He compelled the vanquished also to deliver to him all their sacred money, and released the Christian captives whom they held in slavery, and converted the lands which had been assigned to the pagan priests, to the support of the Christian ministry. Also he furnished the ignorant savages with pastors and teachers. Among these shone Absalom, archbishop of Lunden, by whose pious labors, the gospel received an establishment in this island, which had so long baffled every attempt to evangelize it. Absalom ought to be ranked among those genuine benefactors of mankind, who are willing to spend and be spent for the good of souls. Even Jaremar, the prince of Rugen, received the gospel, and not only taught his wayward subjects by his life and example, but also by his useful instructions and admonitions. Sometimes he employed menaces, but to what degree and with what circumstances is not known. Certain it is, that the people of Rugen from that time, were in some sense, at least, evangelized. No people had ever shown a more obstinate aversion to the doctrines of christianity; nor were the military proceedings of Eric and Waldemar calculated to soften their animosity. In this article, however, as in the last, the characters of the missionaries ought to be distinguished from those of the princes; for in the accounts of both the missionaries there appears very good evidence of a genuine propagation of godliness. These events in Rugen took place about the year 1168. When the characters of princes are distinguished from that of missionaries, it is by no means intended that the conduct of the former was unjustifiable. The people of Rugen were a band of pirates and robbers; and it is not improbable, but that the right of self-preservation might have authorized the Danish expedition.

The Finlanders were of the same character with the people of Rugen, and infested Sweden with their incursions. Eric, king of the last mentioned country, vanquished them in war, and is said to have wept, because his enemies died unbaptized. As soon as he was master of Finland, he sent Henry, bishop of Upsal, to evangelize the barbarians. The success of this missionary was great, and he is called the apostle of the Finlanders, though he was murdered, at length, by some of that refractory people. He was stoned to death at the instigation of a murderer, whom he had endeavored to reclaim by his censures.

Eric was excellent, both as a Christian and a king. His



piety provoked the derision of some impious malcontents, by whom he was attacked, while employed in public worship. "The remainder of the festival," said he, "I shall observe elsewhere." It was the feast of the ascension, which he was celebrating. He went out alone to meet the murderers, that he might prevent the effusion of blood, and died commending his soul to God.

## CHAPTER XIV.

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### THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

#### GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.—THE WALDENSES.

THOUGH the narrative of the Waldensian transactions does not belong exclusively to the thirteenth century, it is, however, ascribed to it, because during this the sect endured most cruel persecutions, and experienced many severe conflicts, which particularly excited the attention of all Europe. At this period a visible church can hardly be said to have an existence.—There were, however, individuals who loved the Lord, and served him in the midst of corruption, error and danger.

It was then a time of immense ignorance and wickedness. True, the Aristotelean philosophy greatly prevailed; but it by no means enlightened men's minds with useful science. Every serious inquirer after truth was embarrassed beyond measure. The most learned doctors, with very few exceptions, were not in their knowledge many degrees above the most ignorant and vulgar. The herd of students foolishly employed themselves about the miserable translations of Aristotle to no purpose. Their ambition was to appear learned in the eyes of the senseless multitude.—The Dominicans and Franciscans were almost the only orders which devoted themselves to study.—These had ample buildings and friendly houses. They attended the deathbeds of the rich and great, and urged them to bequeath immense legacies to their own orders. These gained much ground, and till the time of the institution of the Jesuits were the pillars of the papacy. Persecution of heretics, so called, formed a great part of their employment. While the other orders had, by their immoralities reduced themselves to contempt; these two orders, having the semblance of worth, not the substance, revived the authority of the Romish church,



supported and strengthened every reigning superstition, and by deep laid plans of hypocrisy, induced numbers to enrich both the papacy and the monastic establishments. These two orders, having obtained a decided ascendancy in England, arrogated to themselves great power. The abject slavery and superstition, under which England then sunk, appears, from a commission which Innocent IV. gave to John the Franciscan, in 1247, as follows: "We charge you, that, if the major part of the English prelates should make answer, that they are exempt from foreign jurisdiction, you demand a greater sum, and compel them, by ecclesiastical censures, to withdraw their appeals, any privilege or indulgence notwithstanding."

So shameless were the popes at this time, in their exactions, and so perfect was their dominion over mankind, that they grossly defrauded even the Franciscans themselves, and were not afraid of the consequences. Men who received not the testimony of Jesus Christ, and refused submission to his easy yoke, were induced to kiss the iron rod of an Italian tyrant.

The greater part of Europe had now forsaken the all-important article of justification by the merit of Jesus Christ alone through faith, and were entangled in the nets of pharisaical religion, and readily betook themselves to numberless superstitions, to give quiet and ease to their consciences. The Waldenses found peace and comfort, and the expectation of heaven through Jesus Christ alone by faith, and hence despised the whole popedom with all its appendages; while others, who trembled in conscience for their sins, and knew not the holy wisdom of resting in Christ alone for salvation, might swell with indignation at the wickedness of the court of Rome, but durst not emancipate themselves from its bonds. The power of the pope was then but a cement of wickedness, which encouraged men with the hopes of heaven, while living in superstition and the indulgence of the greatest crimes.

In 1234, pope Gregory IX. desirous of increasing the credit of the popedom, by a bull directed to all christendom, invited men to assume the cross, and to proceed to the holy land. In this he says, "The service to which they are now invited is an EFFECTUAL ATONEMENT for the miscarriages of a negligent life. The HOLY WAR is a compendious method of discharging men from guilt, and restoring them to the divine favor. Even if they die on their march, the intention will be taken for the deed, and many may in this way be crowned with fighting."

In this, Gregory, in effect, opposed the doctrine of the atonement of Christ, and in contempt of it, taught men to expect justification from God, on the merit of military service, rendered at the command of his vicegerent. In this way the

human mind was removed from faith in Christ, and men were taught to rely for pardon on the sovereign pontiff, and were led to imbibe the fatal doctrine, that wickedness might be committed, with the flattering prospect of gaining the divine favor, without a reformation of heart and life.

That the ecclesiastical rulers in those miserable times, did not desire the promotion of piety, but their own secular emolument, is evident from their releasing those who had engaged in the crusade to the holy land, from their vows, on the payment of a fine. It is easily conceived that much wealth would be amassed by this dispensing power. Men are taught to purchase pardon by being liberal in the bestowment of their money on the popish hierarchy, and that this was a sure way to cover their crimes.

During this season of gross darkness the scripture was neglected; appeals were not made to the word of God, but to Aristotle and the fathers, which were considered as decisive. The few who truly feared and served God, suffered extreme persecution.

Of the eastern churches scarce any thing worthy of relation occurs, except that they were overrun by a mixed multitude under Othman, who, in the year 1299, was proclaimed Sultan, and founded a new empire. These, under the name of Turks, succeeded the Saracens, both in the propagation of Mahometanism, and in diffusing the horrors of war. A few who had been illuminated by the rays of divine light and love, exemplified the power of religion in their lives: among this number, Lewis IX. of France, held a conspicuous rank. He often invited men of religious character to his table, banished from his court all diversions prejudicial to morals, and lived a life of self-denial. No man, who violated the rules of decorum, could find admission into his presence. He frequently retired for the purpose of secret prayer. Those who were guilty of blasphemy, were, by his order, marked on the lips, some say on the forehead, with a hot iron. Uprightness and integrity strongly marked his character. The nobles he suffered not to oppress their vassals. The exercise of sovereign power was, in his hands, a blessing to mankind. In him, wisdom and truth, sound policy and Christian sincerity appeared not at variance, but in sweet concord. Under the complicated disadvantages of his situation, he could only cherish the spirit of a Christian himself: the whole tenor of his life demonstrated the sincerity of his faith and love: but, enslaved by papal domination, he could not emancipate his subjects.

True it is, that he engaged in the mad project of the crusades, a project imprudent and chimerical: but in the whole



course of his military measures, he avoided the unnecessary effusion of blood by saving the life of every infidel whom he could take prisoner. In all this, Lewis was the same man; the fear of God was his predominant principle of action. He was taken captive by the Saracens and menaced with death: but ceased not from his usual fortitude and concern for his soldiers. At length being ransomed, as he returned to Europe, three sermons were preached every week on board his ship, and the sailors and soldiers were catechised and instructed, he himself bearing a part in all the religious offices.

On a second crusade, Lewis laid siege to Tunis on the coast of Africa, and died before that city. His advice to Philip his eldest son, which he then gave, was very salutary. "Avoid wars," says he, "with Christians, and spare the innocent subjects of your enemy. Discountenance blasphemy, drunkenness, and impurity. Lay no heavy burdens on your subjects. I pray our Lord Jesus Christ to strengthen you in his service, and always to strengthen his grace in you; and I beg that we may together see, praise and honor him to eternity. Suffer patiently; being persuaded that you deserve much more punishment for your sins; and then tribulation will be your gain. Love and converse with the godly: banish the vicious from your company: delight to hear profitable sermons: wherever you are, permit none, in your presence, to deal in slanderous or indecent conversation. Hear the poor with patience, and where your own interest is concerned, stand for your adversary yourself, till the truth appear." In his last hours, Lewis prayed with tears for the conversion of infidels and sinners; and besought God that his army might have a safe retreat, lest through weakness of the flesh they should deny Christ. He repeated aloud, "Lord, I will enter into thine house; I will worship in thy holy temple, and give glory to thy name. Into thine hands I commend my spirit." These were his last words. He died in 1270, aged 55.

This century was dark indeed; there does not appear to have been in the whole Romish church a single divine, who could give to a serious inquirer a scriptural answer to the question, "what shall I do to be saved?" The light of scripture and of its genuine doctrines was unknown in christendom. The ignorance of the times was exceedingly great, and the difficulty of acquiring divine knowledge beyond our conception.

In the midst of this darkness, Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, a man of excellent genius, distinguished himself for his sound morals, and great learning. His mind was always more clear in discerning the END of true religion than it was in dis-

covering the MEANS of promoting it. Upright, intrepid, disinterested, and constantly influenced by the fear of God, he failed of bringing about the good which he conceived in his heart, because he had too little acquaintance with "the mystery of godliness," and because he too much relied on moral and prudential plans, for that reformation of mankind, which is sought in vain from every thing, except from the knowledge and application of the gospel. He was, for many years, attached to the church of Rome, but all along, opposed to its abuse of power and unjust exactions; towards the close of his life, he became more than ever convinced of its gross abominations and scandals, and though like most divines of that age, not acquainted with the just nature of the Christian article of justification by Jesus Christ the righteous; yet he appears to have trusted to him for eternal salvation, and to have known too well his own sinfulness to have put any trust in himself.

The Cathari, who were evidently a people of God, received great accessions of members from the learned labors and godly zeal of Peter Waldo, an opulent merchant of Lyons, toward the close of the twelfth century. They were gloriously distinguished by a dreadful series of persecution, and exhibited a spectacle, both of the power of divine grace, and of the malice and enmity of the world against the real gospel of Jesus Christ. I propose to represent in one connected view, the history of this people till a little after the time of their reformation. The spirit, doctrine, and progress of the Waldenses will be more clearly understood by this method, than by broken and interrupted details; and the thirteenth century seems the most proper place in which their story should be introduced.

These people were numerous in the valleys of Piedmont. Hence the name of Vaudois, or Vallenses was given them, particularly to those who inhabit the valleys of Lucerne and Argrogne. A mistake arose from similarity of names, that Peter Valdo or Waldo, was the first founder of these churches. For the name Vallenses being easily changed into Waldenses, the Romanists improved this very easy and natural mistake into an argument against the antiquity of these churches, and denied that they had any existence till the appearance of Waldo. During the altercations of the papists and protestants, it was of some consequence that this matter should be rightly stated; because the former denied that the doctrines of the latter had any existence till the days of Luther. But from a just account of the subject, it appeared, that the real protestant doctrine existed during the dark ages of the church, long before Waldo's time.

About 1160, the doctrine of transubstantiation was required



by the court of Rome to be acknowledged by all men. This led to idolatry. Men fell down before the consecrated host and worshipped it as God. The impiety of this abomination shocked the minds of all men who were not dead to a sense of true religion. The mind of Peter Waldo was aroused to oppose the abomination, and to strive for a reformation. A fear of God, in union with an alarming sense of the wickedness of the times, led him to conduct with courage in opposing the dangerous corruptions of the hierarchy. He abandoned his mercantile occupation, distributed his wealth to the poor, and exhorted his neighbors to seek the bread of life. The poor, who flocked to him to share his alms, received the best instruction he was capable of communicating, and revered the man, of whose liberality they partook, while the great and the rich both hated and despised him.

A secular man like Waldo needed instruction. But where could it be found, at a time of such general ignorance and declension? He knew that the scriptures were given as infallible guides, and thirsted for those sources of instruction, which, at that time, were in a great measure a sealed book in the Christian world. To men who understood the Latin tongue, they were accessible. But how few were these compared with the bulk of mankind! The Latin vulgate Bible was the only edition of the sacred book at that time in Europe: and, the languages then in common use, the French and others, however mixed with the Latin, were, properly speaking, by this time separate and distinct from it. It appears that the Christian world under providence, was indebted to Waldo, for the first translation of the Bible into a modern tongue. No pains had been taken, by those who were attached to the popish system, to diffuse biblical knowledge among the vulgar. The benevolent attempt to send the bread of life among the common people, by giving them the scriptures in their own language, if we except the single instance of the Slavonian version, was purely and exclusively of protestant origin.

As Waldo grew more acquainted with the scriptures, he saw that the general practice of nominal Christians was totally abhorrent from the doctrines of the New Testament: and in particular, that a number of customs, which all the world regarded with reverence, had not only no foundation in the divine oracles, but were even condemned by them. Inflamed with equal zeal and charity, he boldly condemned the reigning vices, and the arrogance of the pope. He did more: as he advanced in the knowledge of the true faith and love of Christ, he taught his neighbors the principles of practical godliness, and encouraged them to seek salvation by Jesus Christ.

John de Beles Mayons, archbishop of Lyons, a distinguished member of the corrupt system, forbade the new reformer to teach any more, on pain of excommunication, and of being proceeded against as an heretic. Waldo replied, that though he was a layman, yet he could not be silent in a matter which concerned the salvation of men. On this, the bishop endeavored to apprehend him. But the great affection of Waldo's friends, the influence of his relations, who were men of rank, the universal regard paid to his probity and piety, and the conviction which, no doubt many felt, that the extraordinary circumstances justified his assumption of the pastoral character; all things operated so strongly in his favor, that he lived concealed at Lyons three years.

Pope Alexander III. having heard of the proceedings of Waldo, anathematized him and his adherents, and commanded the archbishop to proceed against them with the utmost rigor.

Waldo fled from Lyons, and his disciples followed him. By this dispersion, the doctrine of Waldo was widely disseminated throughout Europe. In Dauphiny, whither he retired, his tenets took a deep and lasting root. Some of his people probably did join themselves to the Vaudois of Piedmont, and the new translation of the Bible, was, doubtless, a rich accession to the spiritual treasures of that people. Waldo himself, however, seems never to have been among them. Persecuted from place to place, he retired into Picardy. Success still attended his labors; and the doctrines which he preached, appear to have so harmonized with those of the Vaudois, that they and his people were henceforward considered as the same.

To support and encourage the church of Christ, formed no part of the glory of the greatest and wisest princes of that age. Philip Augustus, one of the most prudent and sagacious princes that France ever saw, was enslaved by the god of this world. He took up arms against the Waldenses of Picardy, pulled down 300 houses belonging to those who supported their party, destroyed some walled towns, and drove the inhabitants into Flanders. Not content with this, he pursued them thither, and caused many of them to be burned. It appears that, at this time, Waldo fled into Germany, and at last settled in Bohemia, where he ended his days about the year 1179. He appears to have been one, of whom the world was not worthy, and to have turned many unto righteousness. The word of God then grew and multiplied. In Alsace and along the Rhine the gospel was preached with a powerful effusion of the Holy Spirit: persecution ensued, and thirty-five citizens of Nantz were burned at one fire, in the city of Bingen, and at Mentz, eighteen. In



those persecutions, the bishop of Mentz was very active, and and the bishop of Strasburg was not inferior to him in vindictive zeal, for, through his means, eighty persons were burned at that place. Every thing relating to the Waldenses resembled the scenes of the primitive church. Numbers died praising God, and in confident assurances of a blessed resurrection; whence the blood of the martyrs became again the seed of the church; and in Bulgaria, Croatia, Dalmatia, and Hungary, churches were planted, which flourished in the thirteenth century, governed by Bartholomew, a native of Carcassone, a city not far from Toulouse, which might be called in those days, the metropolis of the Waldenses, on account of the numbers who there professed evangelical truth. In Bohemia and the country of Passaw, the churches were reckoned to have contained in the former part of the fourteenth century eighteen thousand professors. Almost throughout Europe Waldenses were then to be found; and yet they were treated as the off-scouring of the earth, and as people against whom all the power and wisdom of the world were united. But "the witnesses continued to prophesy in sackcloth," and souls were built up in the faith, hope, and charity of the gospel.

Here we are just called on to vindicate the claim, which this people made to the honorable character of the church of God. In times of great declension, whoever is led by the spirit of God to revive true religion, necessarily exposes himself to the invidious charges of arrogance, uncharitableness and self-conceit. By condemning all others, such an one provokes the rest of the world to observe and investigate his faults. These disadvantages the Waldenses had in common with other reformers; they had also disadvantages peculiarly their own. Power, knowledge, and learning, were almost entirely in the hands of their adversaries. In them very particularly, God Almighty chose the weak and foolish things of the world, to confound the wise. As they were, for the most part, a plain and illiterate people, they furnished no learned divines, no profound reasoners, nor able historians. The vindication, therefore, of their claims to the character of a true church must be drawn principally from the holiness of their lives and the patience of their sufferings.

Rainerius, the cruel persecutor, owns that the Waldenses frequently read the holy scriptures, and in their preaching cited the words of Christ and his apostles concerning love, humility, and other virtues; insomuch that the women who heard them were enraptured with the sound. He further says, that they taught men to live, by the words of the gospel and the apostles; that they led religious lives; that their manners were seasoned

with grace, and their words prudent; that they freely discoursed of divine things, that they might be esteemed good men. He observes likewise, that they taught their children and families the epistles and gospels. Claude, bishop of Turin, wrote a treatise against their doctrines, in which he candidly owns, that they themselves were blameless, without reproach among men, and that they observed the divine commands with all their might.

Jacob de Riberia says, that he had seen peasants among them who could recite the book of Job by heart; and several others, who could perfectly repeat the whole New Testament.

The bishop of Cavaillon once obliged a preaching monk to enter into conference with them, that they might be convinced of their errors, and the effusion of blood be prevented. This happened during a great persecution in 1540, in Merindol and Provence. But the monk returned in confusion, owning that he had never known in his whole life so much of the scriptures, as he had learned during those few days, in which he had held conferences with the heretics.—The bishop however, sent among them a number of doctors, young men, who had lately come from the Sorbonne, at Paris, which was renowned for theological subtilty. One of them openly owned, that he had understood more of the doctrine of salvation from the answers of the little children in their catechism, than by all the disputations which he had ever heard. This is the testimony of Vesembecius in his oration concerning the Waldenses. The same author informs us farther, that Lewis XII. importuned by the calumnies of informers, sent two respectable persons into Provence, to make inquiries. They reported, that in visiting all their parishes and temples, they found no images or Roman ceremonies, but, that they could not discover any marks of the crimes with which they were charged; that the Sabbath was strictly observed; that children were baptized according to the rules of the primitive church, and instructed in the articles of the Christian faith, and the commandments of God.—Lewis having heard the report, declared with an oath, “they are better men than myself or my people.”

We must add here the testimony of that great historian, Thuanus, an enemy indeed to the Waldenses. though a fair and candid one.

He is describing one of the vallays inhabited by this people in Dauphiny, which is called the stoney valley. “Their clothing,” he says, “is of the skins of sheep; they have no linen. They inhabit seven villages: their houses are constructed of flint stone, with a flat roof covered with mud, which being spoiled or loosened with rain, they smooth again with a roller.



In these they live with their cattle, separated from them, however, by a fence. They have besides two caves, set apart for particular purposes, in one of which they conceal their cattle, in the other themselves, when hunted by their enemies. They live on milk and venison, being by constant practice, excellent marksmen. Poor as they are, they are content, and live separate from the rest of mankind. One thing is astonishing, that persons externally so savage and rude, should have so much moral cultivation. They can all read and write. They are acquainted with French so far as is needful for the understanding of the Bible, and the singing of psalms. You can scarce find a boy among them, who cannot give you an intelligible account of the faith which they profess; in this, indeed, they resemble their brethren of the other valleys: they pay tribute with a good conscience, and the obligation of this duty is particularly noted in the confession of their faith. If by reason of the civil wars, they are prevented from doing this, they carefully set apart the sum, and at the first opportunity pay it to the king's tax-gatherers."

Francis I. the successor of Lewis XII. received, on inquiry, the following information concerning the Waldenses of Merindol, and other neighboring places: namely, that they were a laborious people, who came from Piedmont to dwell in Provence, about two hundred years ago: that they had much improved the country by their industry; that their manners were most excellent; that they were honest, liberal, hospitable, and humane; that they were distinct from others in this, that they could not bear the sound of blasphemy, or the naming of the devil, or any oaths, except on solemn occasions; and that if they ever fell into company where blasphemy or lewdness formed the subject of the discourse, they instantly withdrew themselves. Such are the testimonies to the character of this people from enemies!

Luther, who owns that he was once prejudiced against them, testifies that he understood by their confessions and writings, that they had been for ages singularly expert in the use of the scriptures. He rejoiced and gave thanks to God, that he had enabled the reformed and the Waldenses, to see and own each other as brethren. By the general confession of the Romanists, it appears, that the Protestants and the Waldenses, were looked on as holding the same principles. The churches of Piedmont were, however, on account of their superior antiquity, regarded as guides of the rest, insomuch, that when two pastors, who had been sent by them into Bohemia, acted with perfidy, and occasioned a greivous persecution; still the Bohemians ceased not to desire pastors from Piedmont, only

they requested, that none but persons of tried characters might be sent to them in future.

From the borders of Spain, throughout the South of France for the most part, among and below the Alps, along the Rhine, on both sides of its course, and even to Bohemia, thousands of godly souls were seen patiently to bear persecution for the sake of Christ, against whom malice could say no evil, except that which admits the most satisfactory refutation: men distinguished for every virtue, and only hated because of godliness itself. Persecutors with a sigh owned, that, because of their virtue, they were the most dangerous enemies of the church. But of what church? Of that, which in the thirteenth century, and long before, had shown itself to be Antichristian. How faithful is the promise of God in supporting and maintaining a church, even in the darkest times! but her livery is often sackcloth, and her external bread is that of affliction, while she sojourns on earth.

The Waldenses were conscientiously obedient to established governments, and their separation from a church, so corrupt as that of Rome, was with them only a matter of necessity. We shall now see what they were in point of doctrine and discipline.

The leading principle of this church was, "that we ought to believe that the holy scriptures alone contain all things necessary to our salvation, and that nothing ought to be received as an article of faith but what God hath revealed to us." Wherever this principle dwells in the heart, it expels superstition and idolatry. There the worship of one God, through the one Mediator, and by the influence of one Holy Spirit, is practised sincerely. The dreams of purgatory, the intercession of saints, the adoration of images, dependence on relics and austerities, cannot stand before the doctrine of scripture. The Waldenses were faithful to the great fundamental principle Protestantism.—"They affirm, that there is only one Mediator, and therefore that we must not invoke the saints. That there is no purgatory; but that all those, who are justified by Christ, go into life eternal."

A number of their old treatises evince, that for some hundred years, the principles of the gospel, which alone can produce such holiness of life as the Waldenses exhibited in their conduct, were professed, understood, and embraced by this chosen people, while Antichrist was in the very height of his power.

In a book concerning their pastors we have this account of their vocation.

"All who are to be ordained as pastors among us, while they



are yet at home, entreat us to receive them into the ministry, and desire that we should pray to God, that they may be rendered capable of so great a charge. They are to learn by heart all the chapters of St. Matthew and St. John, all the canonical epistles, and a great part of the writings of Solomon, David and the prophets. Afterwards, having exhibited proper testimonials of their learning and conversation, they are admitted as pastors by the imposition of hands.—The junior pastors must do nothing without the license of their seniors; nor are the seniors to undertake any thing without the approbation of their colleagues, that every thing may be done among us in order. We pastors meet together once every year, to settle our affairs in a general synod. Those whom we teach, afford us food and raiment with good will, and without compulsion. The money given us by the people is carried to the said general synod, is there received by the elders, and is applied partly to the supply of travelers, and partly to the relief of the indigent. If a pastor among us shall fall into gross sin, he is ejected from the community, and debarred from the function of preaching.”

The Waldenses in general expressed their firm belief that there is no other mediator than Jesus Christ: they spake with great respect of the Virgin Mary as holy, humble, and full of grace; at the same time they totally discountenanced that senseless and extravagant admiration, in which she had been held for ages. They asserted, that all, who had been and shall be saved, have been elected of God before the foundation of the world; and that whosoever upholds free will, absolutely denies predestination, and the grace of God. By an upholder of free-will, they undoubtedly meant one, who maintains that there are resources in the nature of man sufficiently to enable him to live to God as he ought, without any need of the renewal of his nature by divine grace.

They gave a practical view of the doctrine of the holy Trinity, perfectly agreeable to the faith of the orthodox in all ages. Of the nature and use of the sacraments, they expressed the common sentiments of the Protestant churches. The labors of Claudius, of Turin, in the ninth century, appear under God, to have produced these blessed effects as to the faith and holiness of the Waldenses. Men, who spent and are spent for the glory of God, and for the profit of souls, have no conception of the importance of their efforts. These often remain in durable effects, to succeeding generations, and are blessed for the emancipation of thousands from the dominion of sin and Satan.

The Waldenses took special care for the religious instruc-

tion of their children, by catechetical and expository tracts, adapted to the plainest understandings. These formed a very salutary body of instruction, and early taught the youth the great things which pertained to life and godliness. If no more could be said for this people, than that they hated the gross abominations of popery, and condemned the vices of the generality of mankind, they might have been ostentatious Pharisees, or self-sufficient Socinians. But though, no doubt, there were unsound professors among them, as among all other denominations yet in their community, there were many real Christians, who knew how to direct the edge of their severity against their indwelling sins; and who being truly humbled under a view of their native depravity, betook themselves wholly to the grace of God in Christ for salvation.

It is clearly evident from the general current of their history, that the Waldenses were a humble people, prepared to receive the gospel of Christ from the heart, to walk in his steps, to carry his cross, and to fear sin above all other evils. They were devoutly strict in the discharge of family religion. In some ancient inquisitorial memoirs, describing their names and customs, it is said of them; "Before they go to meat, the elder among them says, God, who blessed the five barley loaves and two fishes in the wilderness, bless this table, and that which is set upon it, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And after meat, he says, the God, who has given us corporal food, grant us his spiritual life, and may God be with us, and we always with him. After their meals, they teach and exhort one another."

There were evidently many humble and devout followers of Christ among his people, who felt the power and enjoyed the consolations of the doctrines of the cross.

The external history of this people is little else than a series of persecution. And it is to be regretted, that while we have large and distinct details of the cruelties they endured, we have very scanty accounts of the spirit, with which they suffered; and still less of the internal exercises of holiness, which are known only to the people of God. That which raged against them in the former part of the thirteenth century, was an assemblage of every thing cruel, perfidious, indecent, and detestable. This was a time when the princes of the earth, as well as the meanest persons, were generally enslaved to the popedom, and were easily led to persecute the children of God with the most savage barbarity. In 1179, some, under various pretexts of their having embraced heretical sentiments, were examined by the bishops and condemned. They were accused of receiving only the New Testament, and of rejecting the



Old, except in the testimonies quoted by our Lord and the apostles. This charge is, however, confuted by the whole tenor of their authentic writings. They were also accused of asserting the Manichean doctrine of two independent principles; of denying the utility of infant baptism, and of many other things, and all with an evident design to persecute them to death; because they stood opposed to the errors and abominations of the church of Rome.

Rainerius, who was a bigoted papist, owns, that the Waldenses were the most formidable enemies of the church of Rome, "because," saith he, "they have a great appearance of godliness; because they live righteously before men, believe rightly in God in all things, and hold all the articles of the creed; yet they hate and revile the church of Rome; and, in their accusations they are easily believed by the people."

But it was reserved to Innocent the third, than whom no pope ever possessed more ambition, to institute the inquisition; and the Waldenses were the first objects of its cruelty. He authorized certain monks to frame the process of that court, and to deliver the supposed heretics to the secular power. The beginning of the thirteenth century saw thousands of persons hanged or burned by these diabolical devices, whose sole crime was, that they trusted only in Jesus Christ for salvation, and renounced all the vain hopes of self-righteousness, idolatry, and superstition. Whoever has attended closely to the subject of the epistles to the Colossians and Galatians, and has penetrated into the meaning of the apostle, sees the great duty of **HOLDING THE HEAD**, and of resting, for justification by faith, on Jesus Christ alone, inculcated throughout them as the predominant precept of christianity, in opposition to the rudiments of the world, to philosophy and vain deceit, to will worship, to all dependence for our happiness on human works and devices of whatever kind. Such a person sees what true protestantism is, contrasted with genuine popery; and, of course, he is convinced, that the difference is not merely verbal or frivolous, but that there is a perfect opposition in the two plans; and such as admits of no coalition or union; and that therefore the true way of withstanding the devices of Satan, is to be faithful to the great doctrine of justification by the grace of Jesus Christ, through faith alone, and not by our own works or deservings. Hence the very foundation of false religion is overthrown; hence troubled consciences obtain solid peace, and faith, working by love, leads men into the very spirit of christianity, while it comforts their hearts, and establishes them in every good work.

Schemes of religion so extremely opposite, being ardently

pursued by both parties, could not fail to produce a violent rupture. The church of Christ and the world were then seen engaged in contest. Innocent first tried the methods of argument and persecution. He sent bishops and monks, who preached in those places, where the Waldensian doctrine flourished. Their success was very inconsiderable. In the neighborhood of Narbonne two monks were employed, Peter de Chateauneuf, and Dominic. The former of these was murdered, probably by Raymond, count of Toulouse, because he had refused to remove the excommunication, which he had denounced against that prince. Though there appears no evidence that Raymond either understood or felt the vital influence of the Protestant doctrine, yet he strongly protected his Waldensian subjects. He witnessed the purity of their lives and manners, and heard with indignation the calumnies with which they were aspersed by their adversaries, who proclaimed to all the world their own hypocrisy, avarice and ambition. He was incensed at the wickedness practised on his subjects, and indignant at his own unmerited disgrace; but his conduct in this instance was unjustifiable. The event was disastrous. Innocent obtained what he wished, a decent pretence for his horrible and most iniquitous persecution; and thousands of the sincerely pious were unrighteously calumniated as accessory to crime.

The insidious customs of the inquisition are well known. From the year 1206, when it was first established, to the year 1228, the havoc made among helpless Christians was so great, that certain French bishops, in the last mentioned year, desired the monks of the inquisition to defer a little their work of imprisonment, till the pope should be advertised of the great numbers apprehended; numbers so great, that it was impossible to defray the charge of their subsistence, and even to provide stone and mortar to build prisons for them. Yet so true is it, that the blood of martyrs is the seed of the church, that in the year 1530 there were in Europe above eight hundred thousand who professed the religion of the Waldenses.

When the Waldenses saw that the design of the pope was to gain the reputation of having used gentle and reasonable methods of persuasion, they agreed among themselves, to undertake the open defence of their principles. They therefore gave the bishops to understand, that their pastors, or some of them in the name of the rest, were ready to prove their religion to be truly scriptural, in an open conference, provided it might be conducted with propriety. They explained their ideas of propriety, by desiring that there might be moderators on both sides, who should be vested with full authority to prevent all



tumult and violence; that the conference should be held at some place, to which all parties might have free and safe access; and that some one subject should be chosen, with the common consent of the disputants, which should be steadily prosecuted, till it was fully discussed and determined; and that he who could not maintain it by the word of God, the only decisive rule of Christians, should own himself confuted.

This was perfectly equitable and judicious, and the bishop could not with decency refuse to accept the terms. The place of discussion agreed on was Montreal, near Carcassone in the year 1206. The umpires on one side were the bishops of Villencuse and Auxere; on the other R. de Bot, and Antony Riviere.

Several pastors were deputed to manage the debate for the Waldenses, of whom Arnold Hot was the principal. He arrived first at the time and place appointed. A bishop named Eusus, came afterwards on the side of the papacy, accompanied by the monk Dominic, two of the pope's legates, and several other priests and monks. The points undertaken to be proved by Arnold, were, that the mass and transubstantiation were idolatrous and unscriptural; that the church of Rome was not the spouse of Christ, and that its polity was bad and unholy. Arnold sent those propositions to the bishop, who required fifteen days to answer him, which were granted. At the day appointed the bishop appeared, bringing with him a large manuscript, which was read to the conference. Arnold desired to be heard by word of mouth, only entreating their patience, if he took a considerable time in answering so prolix a writing. Fair promises of a patient hearing were made to him. He discoursed for the space of four days with great fluency and readiness, and with such order, perspicuity, and strength of argument, that a powerful impression was made on the audience.

At length Arnold desired, that the bishops and monks would undertake to vindicate the mass and transubstantiation by the word of God. What they said on the occasion we are not informed; but the cause of the abrupt conclusion of the conference showed which party had the advantage. While the two legates were disputing with Arnold, the bishop of Villeneuve, the umpire of the papal party, declared, that nothing could be determined because of the coming of the crusaders. What he asserted was too true; the papal armies advanced, and, by fire and faggots, soon decided all controversies.

Arnold and his assistants were, doubtless, of the number of those, who "did truth, and therefore came to the light, that

their deeds might be made manifest, that they were wrought in God." And their adversaries were of those who "hated the light, and would not come to it, lest their deeds should be re-proved."

The recourse of the popish party to arms, in the room of sober argumentation, was to pour contempt on the word of God, and to confess that its light was intolerably offensive to them. The approach of the crusaders, who, in the manner related, put an end to the conference, was not accidental; for Innocent, who never intended to decide the controversy by argument, on the occasion of the unhappy murder of the monk before mentioned, had dispatched preachers throughout Europe, to collect all, who were willing to revenge the innocent blood of Peter of Chateaufort; promising paradise to those, who should bear arms for forty days, and bestowing on them the same indulgences as he did on those, who undertook to conquer the Holy Land. "We moreover promise," says he in his bull, "to all those who should take up arms to revenge the said murder, the pardon and remission of their sins. And since we are not to keep faith with those, who do not keep it with God, we would have all to understand, that every person who is bound to the said earl Raymond by oath of allegiance, or by any other way, is absolved by apostolical authority from such obligations; and it is lawful for any Roman Catholic, to persecute the said earl, and to seize upon his country," &c.

The tyrant proceeds in his bull: "We exhort you, that you would endeavor to destroy the wicked heresy of the Albigenses, and do this with more rigor than you would use towards the Saracens themselves: persecute them with a strong hand: deprive them of their lands, and put Roman Catholics in their room." Such was the pope's method of punishing a whole people for a single murder committed by Raymond.

The French barons, incited by the motives of avarice which Innocent suggested, undertook the work with vigor. The Waldensian Christians then had no other part to act, after having performed the duty of faithful subjects and soldiers, but to suffer with patience the oppressions of Antichrist. Three hundred thousand men, induced by avarice and superstition, filled their country, for several years with carnage and confusion. The scenes of baseness, perfidy, barbarity, indecency and hypocrisy, over which Innocent presided, can scarcely be conceived. These were conducted partly by his legates, and partly by the infamous earl Simon of Montfort.



The castle of Menerbe on the frontiers of Spain, for want of water, was reduced to the necessity of surrendering to the pope's legate. A certain abbot undertook to preach to those who were found in the castle, and exhort them to acknowledge the pope. But they interrupted his discourse, declaring that his labor was to no purpose. Earl Simon and the legate then caused a great fire to be kindled, and burned one hundred and forty persons of both sexes. These martyrs died in triumph, praising God that he had counted them worthy to suffer for the sake of Christ. They opposed the legate to his face, and told Simon, that on the last day when the books should be opened, he would meet with the just judgment of God for all his cruelties. Several monks entreated them to have pity on themselves, and promised their lives, if they would submit to the popedom. But the Christians "loved not their lives to the death:" only three women of the company recanted.

Another castle named Termes, not far from Menerbe, in the territory of Narbonne, was taken by Simon in the year 1210. "This place," said Simon, "is of all others the most execrable, because no mass has been sung in it for thirty years." A remark which gives us some idea both of the stability and numbers of the Waldenses: the very worship of popery, it seems, was expelled from that place. The inhabitants made their escape by night, and avoided the merciless hands of Simon.

But the triumphing of the wicked is short: after he had been declared sovereign of Toulouse, which he had conquered, general of the armies of the church, its son and darling; after he had oppressed and tyrannized over the Waldenses by innumerable confiscations and exactions, he was slain in battle in the year 1218.

Earl Raymond, died of sickness in the year 1222, in a state of peace and prosperity, after his victory over Simon. No man was ever treated with more injustice by the popedom. But nothing is known of his character for knowledge and piety. His persecutor, Innocent, died in 1216; and the famous Dominic in 1220.

The Waldenses suffered sore and incessant persecutions from the church of Rome, in many different parts of Europe, till the time of the reformation, and, in most instances, they endured them with admirable patience and constancy.

Thus largely did the "King of saints" provide for the instruction of his church, in the darkness of the middle ages. The Waldenses are indeed the middle link which connects the

primitive Christians and fathers with the reformed; and by their means, the proof is completely established that salvation, by the grace of Christ, felt in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, and expressed in the life, has ever existed from the time of the apostles till this day; and that it is a doctrine marked by the cross, and distinct from all that religion of mere form, which calls itself Christian, but which wants the spirit of Christ.



## CHAPTER XV.

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### THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

#### GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS CENTURY.

THE same ignorance and superstition, the same vices and immoralities, which predominated in the last century, abounded in this. Real Christians were to be found only among the Waldenses, or in those who worshipped God in obscurity. Various other sects arose, who were cruelly persecuted by popes and emperors; but none appear to have professed the real doctrines, or were influenced by the real spirit of Jesus. Some of them, both in principle and practice, were the disgrace of human nature. But to detail the narratives of fanaticism, with which most ecclesiastical histories abound, is not the object of this work.—The church of God, considered as a society, seems then to have existed only among the Waldenses.

There were numerous societies in this century, that suffered extremely by the iron hand of power. Among all these, the Waldenses, sometimes called Lollards, by way of reproach, seem perfectly distinguished, by their solid piety, sound scriptural judgment, and practical godliness; and therefore they may justly be accounted to have suffered for righteousness sake; while the rest, as far as certainty appears, were the martyrs of folly, turbulence, or impiety.

In the east the profession of christianity still existed in that contracted empire of which Constantinople was the metropolis; but nothing appears like the primitive faith and piety.

The maxims and examples of the court of Rome, in this period, were unspeakably detrimental to the cause of godliness. It claimed a right to dispose of all offices in the church, and in that way, amassed incredible sums. Boniface VIII. then filled the Christian world with the noise and turbulence of his ambition. He died in extreme misery, in 1303, in the ninth

year of his papacy. For fifty years afterward, the church had two or three heads at the same time: and while each of the contending popes was anathematizing his competitors, the reverence of mankind for the popedom was diminished, and the labors of those who strove to propagate divine truth, began to be more seriously regarded by men of conscience and probity.

Eleazer, count of Arian, in Naples, born in 1205, distinguished himself for his piety. At the age of twenty-three, he succeeded to his father's estate; and for five years, which brought him to the close of life, he supported a constant tenor of devotion, and religious seriousness. Some of the regulations of his household were these.

"I cannot allow any blasphemy in my house, nor any thing in word or deed which offends the laws of decorum.

"Let the ladies spend the morning in reading and prayer, the afternoon at some work.

"Dice, and all games of hazard are prohibited.

"Let all persons in my house divert themselves at proper times, but never in a sinful manner.

"Let there be constant peace in my family; otherwise two armies are formed under my roof, and the master is devoured by them both.

"If any difference arise, let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

"We must bear with something, if we have to live among mankind. Such is our frailty, we are scarcely in tune with ourselves a whole day; and if a melancholy humor come on us, we know not well what we would have.

Not to bear and not to forgive, is diabolical; to love enemies, and to do good for evil, is the mark of the children of God.

"Every evening, all my family shall be assembled at a godly conference, in which they shall hear something of God and salvation. Let none be absent on pretence of attending to my affairs. I have no affairs so interesting to me as the salvation of my domestics.

"I seriously forbid all injustice, which may cloak itself under color of serving me."

"If I feel an impatience under affront," said he on one occasion, "I look at Christ. Can any thing which I suffer, be like to that which he endured for me?"

God has his secret saints in the most gloomy state of the church; and Eleazar seems to have been one of these. In his last sickness, the history of our Saviour's passion was daily read to him, and by this means his mind was consoled under the pains with which he was afflicted.



In this century too, Bradwardine, an Englishman, arose, distinguished for his accurate and profound investigation in divinity. Deeply sensible of the desperate wickedness of the human heart, and of the preciousness of the grace of Christ, he seems to have overlooked, or little regarded the fashionable superstitions of his time, and to have applied the whole vigor and vehemence of his spirit to the defence of the principles of the gospel. He was a strong and able advocate for the scripture doctrine of free and sovereign grace, in opposition to all self-righteous claims. Conscious of the pernicious tendency of **SELF-SUFFICIENCY**, he wrote much against Pelagianism, with a heart evidently inflamed with zeal for the divine glory, and laboring for the spiritual profit of souls.—While writing in defence of free grace, he appears to have been under the steady influence of humility and piety; and after having described the opposition made to divine grace from age to age, he thus concludes: “I know, O Lord God, that thou dost not despise nor forsake those who love thee; but thou dost sustain, teach, cherish, strengthen and confirm them. Relying on this, thy goodness and truth, I undertake to war under thy invincible banners.”

Bradwardine lived in an age dreary, unpromising and full of darkness: but notwithstanding all this, he appears to have lived by faith on the Son of God.

John Wickliff, an Englishman, the renowned reformer, a man of extensive knowledge, and great strength of mind, flourished about the year 371. He preached pointedly against the prevailing abuses in religion; particularly the real presence of Christ in the eucharist. On this point he has been considered remarkably clear. In this, his principal design, it appears, was to recover the church from idolatry, especially in regard to the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ.

Sensible that the papal power was founded in usurpation, he insisted that the church of Rome was not the head of other churches, that St. Peter was not superior to the other apostles, and that the pope, in the power of the keys, was only equal to a common priest. These were undoubtedly the sentiments of genuine protestantism, and excited a spirit of bitter persecutions against him.

This reformer translated the Bible from the Latin into the English tongue: the value of which work, at so dark a time, was great. At this, the Roman hierarchy were enraged, which evinced that they hated the light, and would not come to it, lest their deeds should be reproved.

Concerning Wickliff it may with propriety be said, that a political spirit too deeply infected his conduct; but that special

benefit accrued, from his labors, to the church of Christ, both in England and upon the continent. He died in peace at Lutterworth, in the year 1387.

In the year 1410, his works, about two hundred volumes, were burned at Oxford, by order of Subinco, archbishop of Prague; and in 1428, his remains were dug out of his grave and burned, and his ashes thrown into the river at Lutterworth.

Wickliff had many errors and many virtues: but he gave evidence of true piety. An effusion of the Divine Spirit accompanied his labors, which were abundant, and its effects appear to have been lasting. He was a formidable adversary of the papal superstitions, and a spirited and able advocate for the **RIGHT** of the common people to read the scriptures.—He was earnest, every where in his writings, to establish the grand Protestant sentiment, of the insufficiency of the scriptures for saving instruction. The reason of his having done this was: friars persecuted the faithful, and said, “It had never been well with the church since lords and ladies regarded the gospel, and relinquished the manners of their ancestors.”

Wickliff labored abundantly to persuade men to trust wholly to Christ, and rely altogether upon his sufferings, and not to seek to be justified in any other way.



## CHAPTER XVI.



### FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

THE LOLLARDS.—THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE, INCLUDING THE CASE OF JOHN HUSS, AND JEROM OF PRAGUE.—THE HUSSITES TILL THE BEGINNING OF THE REFORMATION.—A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

**TERMS** of reproach have, in all ages, been applied to real Christians. Lollard, the name given to the followers of Wickliff, is to be considered as one of them.

Arundel, archbishop of York, in this century used his utmost to induce king Richard II. to harass all persons, who should dare, in their native language, to read and study the gospels of Jesus Christ.

In the year 1399, Richard was deposed by Henry of Lancaster. He was shortly afterward crowned by Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury under the title of Henry IV. A persecution then commenced, more terrible than any which had ever been known under the English kings. William Sawtre, a clergyman in London, who openly taught the doctrine of Wickliff, was the first man who was burnt in England for opposing the abominations of popery. In the year 1400, he suffered the flames of martyrdom, glorying in the cross of Christ, and strengthened by divine grace.

John Badby, an illiterate workman, was about this time persecuted to death, for affirming that the consecrated bread remaineth, after its consecration the same material bread, which it was before, a sign, or sacrament of the living God. "I believe," said he, "the omnipotent God in Trinity to be **ONE**. But if every consecrated host be the Lord's body, then there are twenty thousand gods in England." After he had been delivered by the bishops to the secular power, he was, by the king's writ, condemned to be burned. The prince of

Wales being present, earnestly exhorted him to recant, menacing the most terrible vengeance, if he should remain obstinate. Badby was inflexible. As soon as he felt the fire, he cried, "Mercy!" The prince, supposing that he was entreating the mercy of his judges, ordered the fire to be quenched.—"Will you forsake heresy," said young Henry; "and will you conform to the faith of the holy church? If you will you shall have a yearly stipend out of the king's treasury." The martyr was unmoved; Henry in a rage declared, that he might now look for no favor. Badby gloriously finished his course.

The conflict had now grown serious, and Henry published a severe statute, by which grievous pains and penalties were to be inflicted on all, who should dare to defend or encourage the tenets of Wickliffe; and this, in conjunction with a constitution of Arundel, too tedious to be recited, seemed to threaten the total extinction of this falsely named heresy. The persecutors were very active, and many persons through fear recanted; but worthies were still found, who continued faithful unto death.

In the year 1413, Henry IV. died, and was succeeded by Henry V. who trode in his steps, and countenanced Arundel, in his plan of extirpating the Lollards, and of supporting the existing hierarchy by penal coercions. In the first year of the new king's reign, this archbishop collected in St. Paul's church in London, a synod of all the bishops and clergy of England. The principal object of the assembly was to repress the growing sect; and as Sir John Oldcastle, lord Cobham, had on all occasions discovered a partiality for these reformers, the resentment of the archbishop and of the whole body of the clergy, was particularly levelled at this nobleman. Lord Cobham was most obnoxious to the ecclesiastics. For he had openly and distinguishingly opposed the abuses of popery. At a great expense, he had collected, transcribed, and dispersed the works of Wickliff among the common people without reserve; and it was well known that he maintained a great number of itinerant preachers, in many parts of the country.

But Lord Cobham was a favorite both of the king and the people; and therefore to effect his destruction was an undertaking which required much caution.

The archbishop was in earnest, and he concerted his measures with prudence.

His first step was to procure the royal mandate for sending twelve commissioners to Oxford, to examine and report the progress of heresy. They found Oxford overrun with heretics. The opinions of Wickliff had made their way among the junior students; and the talents and integrity of their master were



held in high esteem and admiration by his disciples.—Arundel laid his information before the grand convention who determined, that, without delay, Lord Cobham should be prosecuted as a heretic. With great solemnity, a copy of each of Wickliff's works was publicly burnt, by the enraged archbishop, in the presence of the nobility, clergy, and people; and one of Lord Cobham's books was of the number burnt. This circumstance confirmed the assembly in their belief that that nobleman was a great encourager of the Lollards.

At the moment when the convocation were vowing vengeance against Lord Cobham, some of the more cool and discreet members, are said to have suggested the propriety of sounding how the young king would relish the measures they had in view, before they should proceed any further. Arundel instantly perceived the wisdom of this advice, and resolved to follow it.

To give weight to his proceedings, this artful primate, at the head of a great number of dignified ecclesiastics, complained most grievously to Henry, of the heretical practices of his favorite servant Lord Cobham, and entreated his majesty to consent to the prosecution of so incorrigible an offender.

Through the management of Arundel the king's mind was previously impressed with strong suspicions of Lord Cobham's heresy and enmity to the church. That very book, above mentioned, of this excellent man, which the convocation had condemned to the flames, was read aloud before the king, the bishop, and the temporal peers of the realm; at the recital of which, Henry was exceedingly shocked and declared, that, in his life he never heard such horrid heresy.—However, in consideration of the high birth, military rank, and good services of Sir John Oldcastle, the king enjoined the convocation to deal favorably with him, and to desist from all further process for some days: he wished to restore him to the unity of the church without rigor or disgrace, and promised, that he himself in the mean time, would send privately to the honorable knight, and endeavor to persuade him to renounce his errors.

The king kept his promise, and is said to have used every argument he could think of, to convince him of the high offence of separating from the church; and at last, to have pathetically exhorted him to retract and submit, as an obedient child to his holy mother. The answer of the knight is very expressive of the frank and open intrepidity which distinguished his character. "You I am always ready to obey," said he, "because you are the appointed minister of God, and bear the sword for the punishment of evil doers. But as to the pope and his spiritual minions, I owe them no obedience, nor will I pay them any;

for as sure as God's word is true, to me it is fully evident, that the pope of Rome is the great Antichrist, foretold in holy writ, the son of perdition, the open adversary of God, and the abomination, standing in the holy place." The extreme ignorance of Henry in matters of religion, disposed him by no means to relish such an answer as this: he immediately turned away from him in visible displeasure, and gave the disciple of Wickliff to the malice of his enemies.

Arundel, supported by the sovereign power, sent a citation to the castle of Cowling, where lord Cobham then resided. But feudal ideas were, at that time, no less fashionable than those of ecclesiastical domination. The high spirited nobleman availed himself of his privileges, and refused admission to the messenger. The archbishop then cited him, by letters affixed to the great gates of the cathedral of Rochester; but lord Cobham still disregarded the mandate. Arundel, in a rage, excommunicated him for contumacy, and demanded the aid of the civil power to apprehend him.

Cobham, alarmed at the approaching storm, wrote a confession of his faith, delivered it to the king, and entreated his majesty to judge for himself, whether he had merited all this rough treatment. This confession the king coldly ordered to be delivered to the archbishop. Lord Cobham then offered to bring a hundred knights, who would bear testimony to the innocence of his life and opinions. When these expedients had failed, he assumed a higher strain, and begged that he might be permitted, as was usual in less matters, to vindicate his innocence by the law of arms. He said he was ready "in the quarrel of his faith, to fight for life or death, with any man living, the king and the lords of his council being excepted." In the issue, Cobham was arrested by the king's express order, and lodged in the tower of London.

On the day appointed, Arundel, the archbishop, with the bishops of London and Winchester, constituted the court. Sir Robert Morley brought lord Cobham before them, and he was arraigned for trial—"Sir," said the primate, "you stand here, both detected of heresies, and also excommunicated for contumacy. Notwithstanding we have, as yet, neither shown ourselves unwilling to give you absolution, nor yet do, to this hour, provided you will meekly ask for it."

Lord Cobham took no notice of this offer, but desired permission to read an account of his faith, which had long been settled, and to which he intended to stand. He then took out of his bosom a writing respecting the articles whereof he was accused, and when he had read it, delivered the same to the archbishop.



The contents of the paper were, in substance, these:

1. That the most worshipful sacrament of the altar is Christ's body, in the form of bread.

2. That every man that would be saved, must forsake sin, and do penance for sins already committed, with true and sincere contrition.

3. That images might be allowable to represent and give men lively ideas of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the martyrdom and good lives of saints; but, that if any man gave that worship to dead images, which was due only to God, or put such hope or trust in them as he should do in God, he became a grievous idolater.

4. That the matter of pilgrimages might be settled in few words. A man may spend all his days in pilgrimages, and lose his soul at last: but he that knows the holy commandments of God, and keepeth them to the end, shall be saved, though he never visited the shrines of saints, as men now do, in their pilgrimages to Canterbury, Rome, and other places.

The archbishop, intent on the destruction of the prisoner, informed him that there were many good things in his paper, but that on several other articles of belief, he had not been sufficiently explicit, and that upon these also his opinion would be expected. As a directory to his faith, he promised to send him in writing, the clear determinations of the church, and warned him very particularly to attend to this point; whether, in the sacrament of the altar, the material bread, did or did not remain, after the words of consecration.

The determination of the primate and clergy, which, according to promise, was sent to lord Cobham, in the tower, here follows:

1. The faith and determination of the holy church, touching the blissful sacrament of the altar is this, that after the sacramental words be once spoken by a priest in his mass, "the material bread, that was before bread, is turned into Christ's very body; and the material wine, that was before wine, is turned into Christ's very blood." And so there remaineth, thenceforth, neither material bread, nor material wine, which were there before the sacramental words were spoken.

2. Every Christian man, living here bodily on earth, ought to confess to a priest ordained by the church, if he can come to him.

3. Christ ordained St. Peter to be his vicar here on earth, whose see is the holy church of Rome: and he granted that the same power which he gave to Peter, should succeed to all Peter's successors: whom we now call popes of Rome . . . .

and whom Christian men ought to obey, after the laws of the church of Rome.

4. Lastly, the holy church had determined, that it is meritorious to a Christian man to go on a pilgrimage to holy places; and there to worship holy relics, and images of saints, apostles, martyrs, and confessors, approved by the church of Rome.

On Monday, the day appointed for the next examination, Arundel accosted lord Cobham, with an appearance of great mildness, and put him in mind that on the preceding Saturday, he had informed him, he was "accursed for contumacy and disobedience to the holy church;" and had expected he would at that time have meekly requested absolution. The archbishop then declared, that even now it was not too late to make the same request, provided it was done in due form, as the church had ordained.

Lord Cobham, with the humility of a Christian, and the firmness of a soldier, replied: "I never yet trespassed against you, and therefore I do not feel the want of your absolution." Then kneeling down on the pavement, and lifting up his hands to heaven, he said, "I confess myself here unto thee, my eternal, living God, that I have been a grievous sinner. How often in my frail youth, have I offended thee, by ungoverned passions, pride, concupiscence, intemperance! How often have I been drawn into horrible sin by anger, and how many of my fellow men have I injured from this cause! Good Lord, I humbly ask of thee mercy: here I need absolution."

Then rising with tears in his eyes, he cried with a loud voice, "Lo! these are your guides, good people. Take notice; for the violation of God's holy law and his great commandments, they never cursed me; but, for their own arbitrary appointments and traditions, they most cruelly treat me and other men. Let them, however, remember, that Christ's denunciations against the Pharisees, shall be fulfilled."

The dignity of lord Cobham's manner, and the vehemence of his expression, threw the court into some confusion.

After the primate had recovered himself, he proceeded to examine the prisoner respecting the doctrine of transubstantiation. "Do you believe, that after the words of consecration, there remains any MATERIAL bread?" "The scriptures," said Cobham, "make no mention of MATERIAL bread; I believe that Christ's body remains in the FORM of bread. In the sacrament there is both Christ's body and the bread: the bread is the thing we see with our eyes; but the body of Christ is hid, and only to be seen by faith." Upon which, with one voice, they cried Heresy! Heresy!—One of the bishops in particular said vehemently, "That it was a foul heresy to call it bread." Cobham



answered smartly, "St. Paul, the apostle, was as wise a man as you, and perhaps as good a Christian:—and yet he calls it **BREAD**. "The bread," saith he, "that we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" To be short with you, I believe the scriptures most cordially, but I have no belief in your lordly laws and idle determinations: ye are no part of Christ's holy church, as your deeds do plainly show." Doctor Walden, the prior of the Carmelites, and Wickliff's greatest enemy, now lost all patience, and exclaimed, "What rash and desperate people are these followers of Wickliff."

"Before God and man," replied Cobham, "I solemnly here profess, that till I knew Wickliff, whose judgment ye so highly disdain, I never abstained from sin; but after I became acquainted with that virtuous man and his despised doctrines, it hath been otherwise with me; so much grace could I never find in all your pompous instructions."

"It were hard," said Walden, "that in an age of so many learned instructors, you should have had no grace to amend your life, till you heard the devil preach."

"Your fathers," said Cobham, "the old Pharisees, ascribed Christ's miracles to Beelzebub, and his doctrines of the devil. Go on, and like them ascribe every good thing to the devil. Go on, and pronounce every man a heretic, who rebukes your vicious lives. Pray, what warrant have you from scripture, for this very act you are now about? Where is it written in all God's law that you may thus sit in judgment upon the life of man? Hold! perhaps you will quote Annas and Caiaphas who sat upon Christ and his apostles."

"Yes, sir," said one of the doctors of law, "and Christ too, for he judged **JUDAS**."

"I never heard that he did," said lord Cobham. "Judas judged himself, and thereupon went out and hanged himself.—Indeed Christ pronounced a wo against him, for his covetousness, as he does still against you, who follow Judas' steps."

At the conclusion of this long and iniquitous trial, the behaviour of lord Cobham was perfectly consistent with the temper he had exhibited during its progress. There remained the same undaunted spirit and resolution, and the same serenity and resignation. Some of the last questions which were put to lord Cobham, respected the worship of the cross; and his answers prove that neither the acuteness of his genius was blunted, nor the solidity of his judgment impaired.

One of the Friars asked him, whether he was ready to worship the cross upon which Christ died?

"Where is it?" said lord Cobham.

"But suppose it was here at this moment?" said the Friar.

"A wise man indeed," said Cobham, "to put me such a question; and yet he himself does not know where the thing is! But, tell me, I pray, what sort of worship do I owe to it?"

One of the conclave answered, "such worship as St. Paul speaks of when he says, God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Christ."

"Right," replied Cobham, and stretched out his arms, "THAT is the true and the very cross; far better than your cross of wood."

"Sir," said the bishop of London, "you know very well that Christ died upon a MATERIAL CROSS."

"True," said Cobham; "and I know also that our salvation did not come by that material cross; but by him who died thereupon. Further, I know well that St. Paul rejoiced in no other cross, but in Christ's passion and death ONLY, and in his own sufferings and persecution, for the same truth which Christ had died for before."

By the quickness and pertinence of lord Cobham's answers, and by his spirit and resolution, the court was amazed, and for that day, brought to a stand. Arundel, with a great show of lenity and kindness, with mournful looks, entreated the prisoner to return into the bosom of the church, and all this with the most consummate hypocrisy. For he, without further delay, judged, and pronounced Sir John Oldecastle, Lord Cobham, to be an incorrigible, pernicious and detestable heretic; and having condemned him as such, delivered him to the secular jurisdiction.

Lord Cobham, with a most cheerful countenance, said,— "Though you condemn my body, which is but a wretched thing, yet I am well assured, ye can do no harm to my soul, any more than could satan to the soul of Job. He that created it, will, of his infinite mercy, save it. Of this I have no manner of doubt. And in regard to the articles of my belief, I will stand to them, even to my very death, BY THE GRACE OF THE ETERNAL GOD." He then turned to the people, and stretching out his hands, cried with a very loud voice, "Good christian people! for God's love, be well aware of these men; else, they will beguile you, and lead you blindfold into hell with themselves." Having said these words, he fell down upon his knees, and lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, prayed for his enemies in the following words, "Lord God Eternal! I beseech thee, of thy great mercy, to forgive my persecutors, if it be thy blessed will!"

He was then sent back to the tower under the care of Sir Robert Moreley. In the mean time, Arundel, finding that the persecution of this virtuous man, was very unpopular, went in person to the king and requested his majesty to postpone, for the



space of fifty days, the punishment of lord Cobham. This profound hypocrite, thus temporized, to find the opportunity of a few weeks for lessening the credit of this pious lord, among the people, by a variety of scandalous aspersions.

Lord Cobham, having remained some time in the tower, at length, by unknown means, made his escape, and arrived safe in Wales, where he concealed himself more than four years. But through the diligence of lord Powis and his dependants, he was at length discovered, taken and brought to London.

His fate was soon determined. He was dragged into St. Giles' field with all the insult and barbarity of enraged superstition; and there, both as a heretic and a traitor, suspended alive in chains, upon a gallows, and burnt to death.

Lord Cobham died, as he had lived, in the faith and hope of the gospel, and to the end of his life bearing a noble testimony to its genuine doctrines. He is allowed to have been a man of great learning, and to have had a profound knowledge of the scriptures. At the place of execution, with the utmost bravery and most triumphant joy, he exhorted the people to follow the instructions which God had given them in the scriptures; and to disclaim those false teachers, whose lives and conversation were so contrary to Christ and his religion.

This noble martyr believed and trusted in Him, who hath graciously said, "Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom;" and he has undoubtedly gone to receive a crown of glory.

Henry Chicheley, then archbishop of Canterbury, continued at the head of that see from 1414 to 1443, and partly by forced abjurations, and partly by the flames, domineered over the Lollards, and almost effaced the vestiges of godliness in the kingdom. This was one of the most gloomy seasons, which the church ever experienced. The doctrines of Wickliff had indeed been embraced in Bohemia; but the fires of persecution were also kindled in that country; at the same time, no quarter was given to any professor of the pure religion of Christ in England. The strictest search was made after Lollards and their books; and while a few souls, dispersed through various parts, sighed in secret, and detesting the prevailing idolatry, worshipped God in spirit and in truth, they found no HUMAN consolation or support whatever. In Kent, whole families were obliged to relinquish their places of abode for the sake of the gospel.

About this time, William Taylor, a priest, was burnt, for asserting that every prayer, for some supernatural gift, must be directed only to God. All, who diligently and devoutly read

the scriptures, and denied popish superstitions, were persecuted as heretics.

But the burning of heretics was found not to be the way to extinguish heresy. On the contrary, both in England and on the continent, such detestable cruelty increased the compassion of the people for the sufferers, excited their indignation against the persecutors, and roused a spirit of enquiry and opposition to the existing hierarchy, which at length, under the direction of a kind, overruling Providence, proved fatal both to papal corruptions and usurped dominion.

In the times of Wickliff and his followers, the prevailing religion had so little influence on morals and the heart, that a popish writer gives the following distinguishing mark of what he accounts heresy: "The disciples of Wickliff are men of a serious, modest deportment; avoiding all ostentation in dress, mixing little with the busy world, and complaining of the debauchery of mankind. They maintain themselves wholly by their own labor, and utterly despise wealth: being fully content with bare necessities. They are chaste and temperate; are never seen in taverns, or amused by the trifling gaieties of life. Yet you find them always employed; either learning or teaching. They are concise and devout in their prayers; blaming an unanimated prolixity. They never swear; speak little; and in their public preaching, lay their chief stress on charity."—Persons of the papal hierarchy, who stigmatized such sentiments as heretical, however, gloried in calling the abominable community with which they themselves associated, the HOLY CHURCH.

Who will deny that the human "heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked!"

This celebrated council made no essential reformation in religion, but persecuted men who truly feared God, and tolerated all the predominant corruptions. Their labors therefore do not deserve to be recorded, on account of the piety and virtue of those who composed this council. The transactions of Constance do, however, throw light on the state of religion at that time. They illustrate the character of John Huss and of Jerom of Prague, and afford various instructive reflections to those, who attend to the dispensations of Divine Providence, and would understand the comparative power of nature and grace, of mere human resources, and the operations of the Holy Spirit. — The council met in 1414. The christian world had been distracted nearly 40 years, by a schism in the popedom. The object of this council was to settle the dispute and restore peace to the church. Three pretenders to the chair of St. Peter, severally, claimed infallibility. The very nature of their struggle was subversive of the authority to which each of them made



pretensions; and of their vain contest there seemed to be no end. The princes, statesmen, and rulers, of the church, in those times, wanted not discernment to see the danger, to which the whole ecclesiastical system was exposed by these contentions; but it seems never to have come into the minds of them, or of any of the members of the council, to examine the foundation on which the popedom itself was erected. That on all sides, was looked on as sacred and inviolable, though allowed to be burdened and incumbered with innumerable abuses.

This council deposed the three existing popes, and chose a new successor of St. Peter, Martin V.; and while they had their eye only on the restoration of the unity of the Roman see, they decreed the superiority of councils over popes; and thus gave a deep wound to the tyrannical heirarchy, which proved of considerable advantage to those real reformers, who arose about a hundred years after the council of Constance.

That there needed a reformation of the church, in all its component parts, and that church discipline ought to be re-established, were, indeed, ideas which lay within their knowledge; and the members of this council universally confessed, that reformation and discipline ought to be prosecuted with vigor. But they brought not to the council the materials, which alone could qualify them for such a work. In general, they knew of nothing higher than the voice of natural conscience, the dictates of common sense, and something concerning the preceptive part of christianity. Their system of religion was letter, not spirit; law, not gospel. To promote the recovery of depraved mankind, they knew no methods but those of moral suasion, on principles merely natural. The original depravity of man, salvation through the atonement of an infinite Redeemer, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, were doctrines, the use and efficacy of which they did not understand. These, however, are the only effectual instruments for the reformation of a corrupted church, or individual.

The members of this celebrated council undertook to make "bricks without straw;" and their projects of reform served only, in the event, to teach posterity, that the real doctrines of the gospel ought to be distinctly known, cordially relished, and powerfully experienced, by those who would undertake to enlighten mankind.

In this council, Italy, France, Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, England, Denmark, and Sweden, were represented. Twenty archbishops, nearly 150 bishops, about 150 other dignitaries, and more than 200 doctors, attended this council: yet they had not sufficient spirit and integrity to punish crimes of the most atrocious nature. Indeed, it was not to be expected that

they should enact and execute laws, which bore hard on their own pride, their sloth, and their love of gain: consequently, after all they did, the substantial evils which existed in the church still remained. They could burn, without mercy, those whom they deemed heretics, though men of real godliness, more readily, than lay the axe of wholesome discipline at the root of their own vices.

At the opening of the council of Constance, pope, John XXIII. and the emperor Sigismund, were at the head of it, who continually endeavored to baffle the views of each other. John was by far the most powerful of the three popes, who, at that time, struggled for the chair of St. Peter; and Sigismund, while he pretended to acknowledge his authority, had secretly resolved to oblige him to renounce the pontificate. Sigismund was remarkable for hypocrisy and dissimulation. By both these potentates, and by many others connected with the council, political artifices were multiplied. These were the men who undertook to punish heretics and reform the church.

Pope John had already, in a council at Rome, condemned the opinions of John Huss, and was then determined to signalize his zeal for what was then called the church, by confirming the same condemnation at Constance.

Huss had been summoned to the council to answer for himself, though already excommunicated at Rome. He obtained, however, a writing from the emperor, engaging that he should be allowed to pass without molestation. The emperor, in conjunction with his brother Wenceslaus, king of Bohemia, had committed him to the care of several Bohemian lords, particularly of John de Chlum. This escort travelled with him to Constance, where they arrived six days after the pope.

John Huss was born in Bohemia in 1373, of mean parentage; but by his superior genius, industry, eloquence, probity and decency of manners, was raised to great eminence. He was appointed rector of the university of Prague, which was then in a very flourishing state. In the year 1400, he was nominated preacher of Bethlehem, and in the same year was made confessor to Sophia, the wife of Wenceslaus king of Bohemia, a princess of great merit, who highly esteemed him.

In 1405, Huss preached in the chapel of Bethlehem, with great celebrity. At first he is said to have held the writings of Wickliff in detestation. But it is not in the power of prejudice to prevent the progress of the Divine councils, and the work of the Holy Spirit on the heart. Huss was gradually convinced of the power and excellency of evangelical truth. His doctrinal knowledge was, however, very limited and defective; but the little fundamental light which, through grace, he attained, was



directed to the best practical purposes. He preached loudly against the abuses of the Romish church, and particularly the imposture of false miracles, which then abounded. He also preached in a synod at Prague, in the archbishop's presence, with great freedom against the vices of the clergy. Gregory XII. one of the three popes, whose schism gave rise to the council of Constance, was received in Bohemia. But when measures were proposed for calling a general council to compose the schism, Huss engaged the university to support them, and exhorted all Bohemia to do the same. The archbishop of Prague, who was attached to Gregory, opposed Huss, called him a schismatic, and forbade him to exercise the pastoral functions in his diocese. About the same time, on occasion of a dispute between the natives and foreigners, who belonged to the university, Huss, having supported the former, and gained his point, the Germans, in disgust, retired from Prague. This circumstance enabled the Bohemian teacher to speak more publicly according to the views of Wickliff. The archbishop of Prague committed the books of the latter to the flames in 1410. But the progress of his opinions was rather accelerated than retarded by this step.

The troubles of Huss were multiplied, and he was excommunicated at Rome. He had sent his proctors thither to answer for him; but they were committed to prison, after they had remained there to no purpose a year and an half. Huss, after his excommunication, had no other remedy but to appeal to Almighty God in very solemn terms. In his appeal, which was charged on him as a crime, among many other things, he says, "Almighty God, the one only essence in Three Persons, is the first and last refuge of those who are oppressed. Our Lord Jesus Christ, very God and very man, being desirous to redeem, from eternal damnation, his children elected before the foundation of the world, has given, by suffering a bloody and ignominious death, this excellent example to his disciples, to commit their cause to the judgment of God." He still continued to preach on subjects, which he deemed seasonable and useful. In one sermon, he treated of the uses of the commemoration of the saints, among which he reckons meditation on the misery of man, subject to death for sin; and on the death which Jesus Christ suffered for our sin. In this same sermon, while he zealously opposed the abuses of the times, he discovered that he himself was not then entirely clear of the popish notion of purgatory. "In praying devoutly for the dead," said he, "we procure relief to the saints in purgatory." He admitted, however, "that there is no mention of such a practice in the holy scriptures; and, that neither the prophets, nor Jesus Christ, nor his

apostles, nor the saints that followed close after, taught prayer for the dead." "I verily believe," continued Huss, "this custom was introduced by the avarice of priests, who don't trouble themselves to exhort the people to live well, as did the prophets, Jesus Christ and the apostles; but take great care to exhort them to make rich offerings in hopes of happiness and a speedy delivery from purgatory.

At length, John Huss was forbidden to preach any more at Prague. All that he could then do was to instruct his countrymen by his writings. Having been summoned, as we have seen, to Constance, he obeyed; and before his departure, offered to give an account of his faith in the presence of a provincial synod at Prague, but was not able to obtain an audience. In this and some other particulars he appears to have acted with great frankness and integrity; and though his mind strongly forboded that which happened in the issue, his resolution to appear at the general council was constant and unmoved.

On the day succeeding his arrival at Constance, Huss gave notice of it to the pope, through his friend John de Chlum, who, at the same time, implored for him the protection of his holiness. Pope John was then in much fear on his own account, and it behoved him not, in present circumstances, to exercise the fulness of papal domination. He, therefore, answered courteously; declared that he would use all his power to prevent any injustice to be done to him while at Constance, and took off his excommunication.

Huss appears to have expected that he should have had permission to preach before the council; for he had prepared sermons for that purpose, which are inserted among his works.

In the first of these he declared his reliance on the word of God as the only true and sufficient rule of salvation. Also he declared his veneration for fathers and councils, so far as they are conformable to scripture. He added, "every man must be a disciple either of God or of Satan. Faith is the rudiment of one of these schools, infidelity of the other. A man must believe in God alone, not in the virgin, not in the saints, not in the church, not in the pope: for none of these are God." "The church," he said, "is an assembly of all the predestinated, and consists of the triumphant church in heaven, the militant church on earth, and the sleeping church:" pitiable blindness! "who are now suffering in purgatory." He allowed the intercession of the virgin Mary and of other saints; and, in favor of this popish tenet, spoke far more forcibly, than might have been expected from one, who had so unlimited a veneration for the holy scriptures.

Huss may be said to have been a martyr for holy practice



itself. He does not seem to have held any one doctrine, which at that day was called heretical. The world hated him, because he was not of the world, and because he testified of it, that its works were evil. He appears to have had that faith which works by love, purifying the heart. With those who persecuted him, even to the flames of martyrdom, the term "vicious believer," appears not to have been a solecism in language.—He appears to have received an UNCTION FROM THE HOLY ONE, which preserved his holy affection alive, amidst the contagion of superstition, the temptations of the world, and the menaces of insolent and tyrannical domination.

Those who look only at the external forms of religion, might be tempted to think, that the council of Constance, was in general influenced by the Spirit of God. In all their public sessions they sang an anthem, and then prayed kneeling. After having remained some time in this posture, a deacon called out to them to rise; and the president addressed himself to the Holy Ghost in a loud voice in a collect, which, in very solemn and explicit terms, supplicated his effectual influence, that, notwithstanding the enormity of their sins, which filled them with dread, HE would deign to descend into their hearts, to direct them, to dictate their decrees, and to execute them himself, and also to preserve their minds from corrupt passions, and not suffer them through ignorance or selfishness, to swerve from justice and truth. The ideas, and perhaps the very words were, however, taken from better times, when the operations of the Holy Ghost were not only professed, but FELT, in christian assemblies. The forms of true religion often remain a long time after the spirit of it has been almost extinguished. Both the emperor Sigismund and his consort Barba, who were infamous for lewdness, attended the religious ceremonies of this council. Sigismund, in a deacon's habit, read the gospel, while the pope celebrated mass!

Huss was soon deprived of his liberty, in the following manner. He was accused by Paletz, professor of divinity at Prague, and by Causis, a pastor of one of the parishes of the same city. These men caused bills to be posted up against him in Coustance, as an excommunicated heretic. When Huss complained, the pope replied, "What can I do in this case? Your own countrymen have done it." The bishops of Augsburgh and of Trent were directed to summon him to appear before John XXIII. "I had expected," said Huss, "to give an account of myself before the general council, and not before the pope and his cardinals; however, I am willing to lay down my life, rather than betray the truth." He set out therefore without delay, accompanied by his generous friend John de Chlum. On his arrival at the

pope's palace, he was committed to prison. Chlum made loud complaints to the pope, but in vain. Eight articles were exhibited against Huss by Causis, and the pope appointed commissioners to try him. The vexations and insults, to which Huss was exposed, were numerous and cruel: and he was unjustly accused of being more unfriendly to the church of Rome, than he really was. Whatever Wickliff maintained, Huss was accused of maintaining; nor were his own express declarations respected, particularly in regard to transubstantiation, a doctrine which he certainly believed, and on which he wrote his thoughts while under confinement at Constance. With great clearness he vindicated himself against the charge of heresy; but his holy life was unpardonable in the eyes of his enemies. Moreover, all those whom the faithfulness of his pastoral services in Bohemia had provoked, then found an opportunity to wreak their vengeance upon him.

The generous count de Chlum, grieved and incensed at the imprisonment of Huss, wrote to Sigismund on this subject. That prince immediately sent express orders to his ambassadors to cause him to be set at liberty, and even to break the gates of the prison in case of resistance. The unfortunate Huss was not, however, released; and he soon found that the arts and intrigues, both of the pope and of the emperor, were so deceptive that to commit himself to Him that judgeth righteously, was his only expedient. In the mean time, the doctors, in their preaching, exclaimed most emphatically against the prevailing evils and abuses, and exhorted the council to reform the church with vigor. Its growing corruptions and enormities were, by them, exposed in the strongest colors. Wickliff himself, or Huss, could scarcely have spoken in a more pointed or severe manner. They were not, however, permitted to censure with impunity even the most shameful practices. They preached by order of their superiors, and took particular care, in the midst of their keenest animadversions, to express an unequivocal respect to the popedom in general.

Though Sigismund's authority extended over the empire, and he, by virtue of that authority, *required all his subjects to suffer Huss to pass and repass secure; and for the honor of his imperial Majesty, if need be, to provide him with good passports*, yet the commissioners, for the examination of Huss, persuaded the emperor that he ought not to keep faith with a man accused of heresy, and that, to acquiesce in the desires of the venerable council, was the line of conduct proper for him to pursue, as an obedient and good son of the church; Huss, therefore, was *not allowed to repass*, but was detained in prison at Constance.

Before the death of their countryman, the Bohemian nobility,



enraged at the perfidy of Sigismund, repeatedly remonstrated, by letters, against his proceedings, but all to no purpose. At the solicitation of Paletz, Huss was confined in the Dominican convent, where he became dangerously sick, through the bad air and other inconveniences of a noisome dungeon.

The same John who had most unrighteously persecuted Huss, found himself so disagreeably situated at Constance, by reason of the accusations of his enemies, and the intrigues and manœuvres of Sigismund, and the majority of the council, that he determined to depart, in secret from the assembly. He fled to Schaffhausen, a city belonging to Frederic, duke of Austria, who had promised to defend him. But the emperor, Sigismund, determined on supporting the authority of the council, took such measures as obliged Frederic to surrender at discretion, and to abandon the cause of John. Thus that pontiff, who, at first had presided at the council, after having fled from place to place, was at length confined at Gottleben, in the same prison where Huss, the victim of his cruelty, was confined.

The three rival popes were at length deposed, and declared by the council incapable of being re-elected. Huss, in the mean time, contrary to every principle of justice, honor and humanity, was still kept in confinement, and in vain solicited a fair hearing of his cause.

At this council another striking example of the same spirit of persecution was exhibited, and that towards Jerom of Prague, a firm friend and adherent of John Huss. Jerom was a master of arts, and a man of very superior talents. Though his character was neither clerical nor monastic, yet he spared no pains to second all the endeavors of Huss to promote a reformation in Bohemia. He even travelled into England to procure knowledge, and brought the books of Wickliff into his own country. When Huss was setting out from Prague, Jerom had exhorted him to maintain with steadfastness the doctrines which he had preached, and had promised that he himself would go to Constance to support him, if he should hear that he was oppressed.

Jerom was true to his promise. Huss, in one of his letters to a friend, had desired Jerom not to come, lest he should meet with the same treatment which he himself had experienced; but he did not desist from his purpose, and came directly to Constance. Having learned that Huss was not allowed a fair examination, and that some secret machination was formed against himself, he retired to Uberlingen, whence he wrote to the emperor to request a safe conduct. Sigismund refused to grant his petition. Upon which Jerom published a paper, declaring it to be his desire to answer any charges of heresy that could possibly be brought against him. This produced no satisfactory

answer; and finding he could not be of any service to his friend Huss, he resolved to return to his own country. After his departure, he was summoned to appear before the council, and a *safe conduct* or *passport*, was given him. This, however, contained such a *salvo to justice*, and the *interests of the faith*, as rendered it, in effect, a mere nullity.

To omit a long detail of uninteresting particulars, this persecuted reformer was arrested at Hirsaw, on his return to Bohemia, and was led in chains to Constance. There he was immediately brought before a general congregation, which seemed intent on insulting, ensnaring, and browbeating their virtuous prisoner.

"You vented several errors in our university," said a doctor from Cologne. "Be pleased to name one," answered Jerom. The accuser plead that his memory failed him. "You advanced most impious heresies among us," said a divine from Heidleburg: "I remember one, particularly concerning the Trinity. You declared that it resembled water, snow, and ice." Jerom avowed that he still persisted in his opinions, but was ready to retract, with humility, and with pleasure, when he should be convinced of an error. No opportunity was, however, allowed him either for explanation or defence: all was confusion and uproar: voices burst from every quarter, "Away with him, away with him; to the fire; to the fire."

Jerom stood astonished at the gross indecency of this scene, and as soon as he could in any degree be heard, looked round the assembly with a steady and significant countenance, and cried aloud, "Since nothing but my blood will satisfy you, I am resigned to the will of God." The archbishop of Saltzbourg replied, "No, Jerom—God hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live."

After this tumultuous examination, Jerom was delivered to the officers of the city, and immediately carried to a dungeon. Some hours afterward, Wallenrod, archbishop of Riga, caused him to be conveyed privately to St. Paul's church, where he was bound to a post, and his hands were chained to his neck. In this posture Jerom remained ten days, and was fed only with bread and water. During this time his friends knew not what had become of him; till at length one of them received notice of his pititiable situation, from the keeper of the prison, and procured him better nourishment. The hardships which he underwent brought upon him a dangerous illness, in the course of which he pressed the council to allow him a confessor. With difficulty he at length obtained his request, and through his means procured some small mitigation of his sufferings; but he remained in prison till the day of his death.



Some who composed the council of Constance, were learned and able; many, superstitious and bigotted; and most of them, worldly-minded and unprincipled, totally ignorant of evangelical truth. And as the works of the famous Wickliff, which had laid the foundation of the religious innovations in Bohemia, reprobated the general course of their wicked practices, they proceeded to condemn the doctrines of that obnoxious reformer. This they did, as far as appears, without one dissenting voice, and pronounced the author of them a heretic. They even proceeded so far as to declare "that there is no salvation out of the church of Rome." This they affirmed on the supposed validity of a decretal of pope Callixtus, which declared "that the church of Rome is the mistress of all churches; and that it is not lawful to depart from her decisions."

At this council, complaint was made by the Poles, against the Teutonic knights, who, armed with indulgences for the conversion of infidels, and with papal bulls for putting themselves in possession of conquered countries, gratified their military passion, while they imagined they were doing God service, by harassing and wasting the Prussians and Poles with fire and sword. The question of law for the decision of the assembly was, whether it is right for christians to convert infidels by force of arms, and to seize their estates. The council appointed commissioners to enquire into the business; but otherwise did not decide the dispute.

At this council too, the dispute concerning administering the cup in the communion to the laity, was introduced; and those who were for the disuse of it, asserted that the controversy arose in consequence of the doctrine of John Huss, and this they urged to hasten his condemnation.

The appearance of the new controversy, added to the question concerning Jerom of Prague, increased the fury of the storm against Huss, and his enemies labored day and night for his destruction. His health and strength had decayed by the rigor of his confinement. The great men of Bohemia endeavored in vain to procure justice to be done to their countryman. Private examinations, insults and vexations, were plied to shake his constancy, and to render a public trial unnecessary. But this holy man, refusing to give answers in private, and continuing to solicit a public trial, gave his adversaries no advantage over him either through warmth or timidity. He retracted nothing of what he had openly preached, and possessed his soul in patience and resignation.

The unrighteous views of the council having been thus far baffled, he was conducted to Constance, lodged in the Franciscan monastery, and loaded with chains; in which condition, ex-

cepting the time when he was under examination, he remained until the day of his condemnation.

His first hearing before the council was attended with so much confusion, through the intemperate rage of his enemies, that nothing could be concluded. In the second, in which the emperor was present, for the purpose of preserving order, Huss was accused of denying the doctrine of transubstantiation.—Some Englishmen, who knew what Wickliff held on that point, and who were ready to take for granted, that Huss dissented in no article from their countryman, pressed him vehemently on the subject. It appeared, however, that Huss followed the church of Rome on this doctrine; and the sincerity of his creed, though a mistaken one, appears from his treatise on the body of Christ.

A tedious dispute ensued concerning the refusal of Huss to join with those who condemned the errors of Wickliff. He explained himself with sufficient precision; declared, that he blamed the conduct of the archbishop of Subinco at Prague, only because he had condemned Wickliff's books without examination, and without distinction; and added, that most of the university of Prague found fault with that prelate, because he produced no reasons from the scriptures. Huss further observed to the council, that, not having been able to obtain justice from John XXIII. he had appealed from him to Jesus Christ. His seriousness in mentioning this appeal exposed him to the derision of the council. Huss, however, with great gravity affirmed, that it was always lawful to appeal from an inferior to a higher court; that in this case the Judge was infallible, full of equity and compassion, and one who would not refuse mercy to the miserable. The levity of the assembly, and the seriousness of the prisoner, were remarkably contrasted. The conscious martyr, in appealing to Jesus Christ, must have had his own mind fixed on the last judgment, and aimed at making an impression on the court by directing their attention to that awful tribunal.

John de Chlum remained an unshaken friend to Huss, throughout all his trials, notwithstanding the multitude of his adversaries, and supported with courage and constancy the insulted victim of their fury. Huss, in his third hearing, answered the enquiries made of him concerning articles of supposed heresy, which were extracted from his works; owning, denying or explaining, with much clearness and candor, as occasion required. He was vehemently pressed to retract his errors, to own the justice of the accusations, and to submit to the decrees of the council. But neither promises nor menaces moved him. "To abjure," said he, "is to renounce an error that hath been held. But, as in many of these articles, errors are laid to my charge



which I never thought of, how can I renounce them by oath? As in many of those articles, which I own to be mine, I will renounce them with all my heart, if any man will teach me sounder doctrines than what I have advanced." His conscientious integrity, however, availed him not. The court demanded a general retraction; and nothing short of that could procure him their favor. The tedious malignity of the third day's examination oppressed, at length, both the mind and body of Huss; and the more so because he had passed the preceding night sleepless through pain of the tooth-ache. For some days before, he had also been afflicted with the gravel, and was, in other respects, in a weak state of health. At the close of the examination, he was carried back to prison, whither John de Chlum followed him. "O what a comfort," said he, "was it to me, to see that this nobleman did not disdain to stretch out his arm to a poor heretic in irons, whom all the world, as it were, had forsaken." In the same letter in which he mentions this, he begs the prayers of his friend, because "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

After the departure of Huss, Sigismund, with the most unrelenting barbarity, pronounced him a heretic worthy of the flames. On the next day, a form of retraction was sent to this persecuted prisoner, which, though it was penned in ambiguous terms, plainly appeared, on the whole, to imply a confession of guilt. Huss therefore refused to sign it; and added, that he had rather be cast into the sea with a millstone about his neck, than give offence to his pious neighbors by acknowledging that to be true which he knew to be false; that he had preached patience and constancy to others, and that he was willing to show an example of these graces, and hoped by divine assistance to be enabled to do so.

We have constantly seen in the course of this history, that the holiness of heart and life, which real christians have evidenced from age to age, has been connected with the peculiar doctrines of christianity. Sometimes one of these doctrines, and sometimes another, constituted the prominent feature of their profession; but it is in vain to look for men of real holiness and virtue, who were inimical or even indifferent to the principles of the gospel. Huss dwelt largely on the depravity of human nature, and taught clearly the necessity of divine influences to bring men to be holy in heart and life. By distinguishing those, whom God made his peculiar people in Christ, and are evidently pointed out, by their practical holiness, as different from the rest of mankind, he gave offence. Undoubtedly his open rebukes of sin, both by his public preaching and writings, and the uniform purity and innocence of his

manners, had inflamed the tempers of the great men of the age, both in church and state. It was, however, scarcely to be expected that the council of Constance should, even upon their own principles, proceed to condemn to the flames without the least proof of heresy, an upright man, because he refused to acknowledge that to be true which he believed to be false; or that this same council should justify the deceit and perfidy of their imperial president: their conduct, therefore, is to be considered as a striking proof, not only of the general depravity of human nature, but also of the general wickedness of the Roman church.

The council settled, before hand, after what manner Huss was to be treated, in case he should retract. He was to have been degraded from the priesthood, and to be forever shut up between four walls. This was the only reward, which the unfeeling tyrants had intended to bestow on him, in the event of his wounding his conscience to gratify them. It would be erroneous to lay the whole weight of blame on the popes, on account of the enormities of the church of Rome. It was generally and systematically corrupt; it had recently deposed three popes; it was, at present, without a pope, and yet was guilty of crimes, not less heinous than the worst which the pontiffs ever committed.

The council exhorted Huss, according to his own account, written the night before his death, to pronounce every one of the articles, which had been extracted from his books, to be erroneous; but he absolutely refused to accede to so unreasonable a requisition, except they would, from the scriptures, *prove* his doctrine to be incorrect.

The emperor and council, having tried their utmost to induce him to recant, and Huss remaining firm in his determination not to give up his doctrine, unless convinced of his error from scripture evidence, he was again brought before the council in the presence of the emperor, the princes of the empire, and an incredible concourse of people. The bishop of Lodi preached a sermon from those words of St. Paul, "*That the body of sin might be destroyed.*" With the grossest ignorance, or the most virulent and indecent malice, he perverted the words to the purpose of the council. "Destroy heresies and errors," said he, "but chiefly that obstinate heretic," pointing to the prisoner. While they were reading the articles extracted, or pretended to be extracted, from his writings, Huss was beginning to answer to each distinctly, but was told that he might answer to them all at the same time, and was ordered at present to be silent. He expostulated in vain on the unreasonableness of this injunction. Lifting up his hands to heaven, he begged the pre-



lates in God's name to indulge him the freedom of speech, that he might justify himself before the people; "after which," said he, "you may dispose of me as you think fit." But the prelates persisting in their refusal, he kneeled down, and with uplifted eyes and hands, with a loud voice recommended his cause to the Judge of all the earth. Being accused in the article of the sacrament of having maintained that the material bread remains after consecration, he loudly declared, that he never believed or taught so. Nothing could be more iniquitous than this charge, which he had fully refuted on his former examination. But the council was determined to burn him as a heretic, and it behoved them to exhibit, at any rate, some shew of proving his heretical opinions. A still more shameless accusation was introduced. It was said, "A certain doctor bears witness, that Huss gave out, that he should become the fourth person in the Trinity." "What is the name of that doctor?" replied the prisoner, protesting against the charge as a flagrant calumny, and making an orthodox confession of his faith on the subject of the Trinity. Nevertheless, the bishop who had read the accusation, refused to mention the doctor's name.— Being again upbraided with his appeal to Jesus Christ, "See," said he, with hands lifted up towards heaven, "most gracious Saviour, how the council condemns as an error what thou hast prescribed and practised, when, overborne by enemies, thou committedst thy cause to God, thy Father, leaving us this example, that when we are oppressed, we may have recourse to the judgment of God." "Yes," continued he, turning to the assembly, "I have maintained, and do still maintain, that an appeal to Jesus Christ is most just and right, because He can neither be corrupted by bribes, nor be deceived by false witnesses, nor be overreached by artifice. I came voluntarily to this council, under the public faith of the emperor here present." In pronouncing these last words, he looked earnestly at Sigismund, who blushed at the sudden and unexpected rebuke.

Sentence was then pronounced both against John Huss and his books; and he was ordered to be degraded. The bishops clothed him in the priest's garments, and put a chalice into his hands. While they were thus employed, Huss said, that "the Jews put a white garment on our Lord Jesus Christ to mock him, when Herod delivered him to Pilate," and he made reflections of the same kind on each of the sacerdotal ornaments. When the prisoner was fully apparelled, the prelates once more exhorted him to retract, and to this exhortation he replied with his usual firmness. They then caused him to come down from the stool on which he stood, and pronounced these words, "O cursed Judas, who, having forsaken the counsel of peace, art

entered into that of the Jews, we take this chalice from thee, in which is the blood of Jesus Christ." But God was with the martyr, who cried aloud, "I trust in the mercy of God, I shall drink of it this very day in his kingdom." They then took from him all his vestments, uttering a curse on stripping him of each. Having completed his degradation, by the addition of some other ridiculous insults not worthy of a distinct relation, they put a paper coronet on his head, on which they had painted three devils, with this inscription, ARCH-HERETIC, and said, "We devote thy soul to the infernal devils." "I am glad," said the martyr, "to wear this crown of ignominy for the love of him who wore a crown of thorns."

When the painted paper was put upon his head, one of the bishops said, "Now we commit thy soul to the devil." "But I," said Huss, "commit my spirit into thy hands, O Lord Jesus Christ; unto thee I commend my spirit, which thou hast redeemed." The council then ordered this sentence to be pronounced, namely: "*The holy synod of Constance declares, that John Huss ought to be given up to the secular power, and does accordingly so give him up, considering that the church of God has no more to do with him.*"

Sigismund committed the execution of Huss to the elector Palatine. The martyr, walking amidst his guards, declared his innocence to the people. When he came near the place of execution, he kneeled and prayed with such fervor, that some of the people said aloud, "What this man has done before, we know not; but now we hear him offer up most excellent prayers to God." The elector Palatine prevented him from speaking to the people, and ordered him to be burned. "Lord Jesus," said Huss aloud, "I humbly suffer this cruel death for thy sake, and I pray thee to forgive all my enemies." His paper crown falling from his head, the soldiers put it on again, saying, "it must be burnt with the devils, whom he had served." His neck was fastened to a stake, and the wood was piled about him. The elector advanced once more on the often repeated subject of retraction. "What I have written and taught," rejoined Huss, "was to rescue souls from the power of the devil, and to deliver them from the tyranny of sin; and I do gladly seal what I have written and taught with my blood." The elector withdrawing, the fire was kindled, and Huss was soon suffocated, having called upon God as long as he could speak. Thus, by a death which has affixed eternal infamy on the council of Constance, slept in Jesus the celebrated John Huss, one of the most upright and blameless of men. Human depravity has not often produced a scene so flagitiously iniquitous, and so much calculated to bring disgrace on the Roman church. The uncommon pains taken



to prevent his death by a retraction, demonstrates the conviction of the council, that they were doing what they could not justify to their own consciences. At the same time the grace of God was marvellously displayed in supporting and strengthening the martyr, who appears indeed to have exhibited all the graces of a true disciple of Christ.

Toward the latter end of the year 1415, a letter was sent to the council from Bohemia, signed by about 60 principal persons, barons, noblemen and others of that kingdom, an extract of which is as follows: "We know not from what motive you have condemned John Huss, bachelor of divinity and preacher of the gospel. Ye have put him to a cruel and ignominious death, though convicted of no heresy. We wrote in his vindication to Sigismund, king of the Romans. This apology of ours ought to have been communicated to your congregations; but we have been told that ye burnt it in contempt of us. We protest, therefore, with the heart as well as with the lips, that John Huss was a man very honest, just, and orthodox; that for many years he conversed among us with godly and blameless manners; that during all those years he explained to us and to our subjects, the gospel and the books of the Old and New Testament, according to the exposition of holy doctors approved by the church; and that he has left writings behind him in which he constantly abhors all heresy. He taught us also to detest every thing heretical. In his discourses he constantly exhorted us to peace and charity, and his own life exhibited to us a distinguished example of these virtues. After all the inquiry which we have made, we can find no blame attached to the doctrine or life of the said John Huss; but on the contrary, every thing pious, laudable and worthy of a true pastor. Ye have not only disgraced us by *his* condemnation, but have also unmercifully imprisoned, and perhaps already put to death Jerom of Prague, a man of most profound learning and copious eloquence. Him also have ye condemned unconvicted. Notwithstanding all that hath passed, we are resolved to sacrifice our lives for the defence of the gospel of Christ, and of his faithful preachers." This letter was unanimously approved in an assembly of Bohemian lords held at Prague.

The council, startled at the bold expostulations of this letter, yet being still determined to maintain their own unjust authority, at length, partly by promises, and partly by threatenings, induced Jerom of Prague to retract his sentiments. In this, Jerom anathematized the articles both of Wickliff and of Huss, and declared that he believed every thing that the council believed. He even added, that if, in future, any doctrine should escape from him contrary to his recantation, he would submit to

everlasting punishment! Thus was disgraced before all the world, and humbled in his own eyes, a man of most excellent morals, of superior parts, and of great learning and fortitude. This is an event, memorable in the annals of human imbecility! Consider diligently the instruction which it affords. The power and the mercy of God, in owning his fallen servant, and afterward restoring and supporting him, were magnified, in this instance, in a very striking manner.

Jerom, after his retraction, was remanded to prison, with some enlargement of liberty.

There were some, notwithstanding the recantation of Jerom, who insisted upon his being tried a second time. The council, therefore, proceeded to examine him again upon the articles formerly exhibited against him, and upon new articles, then, for the first time, brought forward. The prisoner refused to be sworn, because they at first denied him the liberty of defence.

Then it was that this great man began to exhibit that strength of mind, that force of genius and eloquence, and that integrity and fortitude, which will be the admiration of all ages.

Having obtained freedom of speech, during his trial, in his defence he said, "I came to Constance to defend John Huss, because I had advised him to go thither, and had promised to come to his assistance, in case he should be oppressed. Nor am I ashamed here to make public confession of my own cowardice. I confess and tremble while I think of it, that through fear of punishment by fire, I basely consented, against my conscience, to the condemnation of Wickliff and Huss." He then declared that he disowned his recantation, as the greatest crime of which he had ever been guilty; and that he was determined to his last breath to adhere to the principles of those two men, which were as sound and pure, as their lives were holy and blameless. He excepted indeed Wickliff's opinion of the sacrament, and declared his agreement with the Roman church in the article of transubstantiation. Having concluded his speech, he was carried back to prison, and was there visited by several persons, who hoped to reclaim him, but in vain.

Jerom having been brought again before the council, the bishop of Lodi preached a sermon from these words, "*He upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart.*" He exhorted the prisoner not to show himself incorrigible, as he had hitherto done. He paid some tribute of praise to his extraordinary abilities, and at the same time extolled the lenity and generosity with which he had been treated by the council. Jerom, raising himself on a bench, undertook to refute the preacher. He declared again, that he had done nothing in his whole life, of which he so bitterly repented, as his recantation: that



he revoked it from his very son!, as also the letter which he had been induced to write on this subject to the Bohemians; that he had been guilty of the meanest falsehood by making that recantation; that he esteemed John Huss a holy man; and that he knew no heresy of which he had been guilty, unless they should call by that name, his open disapprobation of the vices of the clergy. That if, after this declaration, credit should still be given to the false witness borne against Huss, he should consider the fathers of the council themselves as unworthy of all belief. "This pious man," said Jerom, alluding to John Huss, "could not bear to see the revenues of the church, which were principally designed for the maintenance of the poor, and for works of liberality, spent in debauchery with women, in feasts, hounds, furniture, gaudy apparel, and other expenses, unworthy of christianity."

The firmness, eloquence, and zeal of Jerom, sensibly affected the council. They proposed to him once more to retract. But he replied, "Ye have determined to condemn me unjustly; but after my death I shall leave a sting in your consciences, and a worm that shall never die. I appeal to the sovereign Judge of all the earth, in whose presence you must appear to answer me." After sentence had been pronounced against him, Jerom was delivered to the secular power, and was treated with scorn and insult, similar to that which his friend Huss had experienced. He put the mitre with his own hands on his head, saying he was glad to wear it for the sake of Him who was crowned with one of thorns. As he went to execution, he sung the apostle's creed, and the hymns of the church, with a loud voice and a cheerful countenance. He kneeled at the stake and prayed. Being then bound, he raised his voice, and sung a paschal hymn at that time much in vogue in the church.

"Hail happy day, and ever be adored,

"When hell was conquered by great heaven's Lord."

The executioner having approached to the pile behind his back, lest Jerom should see him, "Come forward," said the martyr, "and put fire to it before my face." He continued alive in the flames a full quarter of an hour, and sustained the torment with great fortitude and courage. When he was much scorched with the fury of the fire, and almost smothered in its flames, he was heard to cry out, "O Lord God, have mercy on me! have mercy on me!" And a little afterward, "Thou knowest how I have loved thy truth." By and by, the wind parted the flames, and exhibited his body full of large blisters, a dreadful spectacle to the beholders; yet even then his lips are said to have continued still moving, as if his mind was actuated by intense devotion.

Though the acquaintance, which Jerom had with the truth of the gospel, appears to have been partial and imperfect; yet the knowledge which he had, doubtless respected the essential doctrines of christianity; and his spirit and constancy, in his last sufferings, his dependence on the grace of Christ, his expectation of a blessed resurrection, and his humble confession of sinfulness and unworthiness, sufficiently distinguish him from the stoic philosopher, or the mere moralist, who, whatever portion he may have of the first of these qualities, is totally void of all the rest.

Jerom endured his last sufferings with a cheerful countenance, and with more than stoical constancy.

By the acts of the council of Constance, the wickedness of the ecclesiastical system, then prevalent in Europe, was clearly demonstrated. Though all the knowledge and ability, which the Roman hierarchy could afford, were collected at Constance, yet the able and learned fathers of that council were so far from reforming the evils of what they called the church, that they proved it more certainly to be Antichrist. The whole of the clerical establishment then concurred in the support of iniquity. The real gospel itself was neither understood, nor preached, nor valued, in the Roman church. They trifled respecting sins with the most scandalous levity, and persecuted to death those very persons who earnestly opposed the corruptions of the times. The glory of God, the truths of the gospel, and real kingdom of Jesus Christ, having been kept out of sight by all who constituted that council, none of them regarded reformation much further than it concerned their own interested views, and nothing that deserved the name of reformation ensued.

In the latter end of the year 1417, the council of Constance, elected Otho de Colonna pope, who took the name of Martin V. How destitute he was of real piety, and of all true knowledge of the scripture doctrines of salvation, and what were the views and sentiments of that council, will appear from the bull by which it was dissolved. An extract of it is as follows: "Martin, bishop, servant of the servants of God, at the request of the sacred council we dismiss it. Moreover, by the authority of the Almighty God and of the blessed apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, and by our own authority, we grant to all the members of the council plenary absolution of all their sins once in their lives, so that every one of them, within two months after the notification of this privilege has come to his knowledge, may enjoy the benefit of the said absolution in form. We also grant them the same privilege in the moment of death; and we extend it to the domestics, as well as to the masters, on condi-



tion, that, from the day of the notification, both the one and the other fast every Friday, during a whole year, for the absolution granted to them while alive, and another year for their absolution in the moment of death, unless there be some lawful impediment, in which case they shall do other works of piety. And after the second year, they shall be obliged to fast on Fridays during life, or do some other acts of piety, on pain of incurring the displeasure of Almighty God and of the blessed apostles St. Peter and St. Paul."

The council of Constance began to sit in 1414, and was dissolved in 1418. In that council a great effort was made by the united wisdom of Europe, but in vain, to effect that reformation, which God alone in his own time produced in such a manner, as to illustrate the divine declaration, Salvation is "not by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

The Bohemians having heard of the murder of John Huss and Jerom of Prague with great indignation, forty thousand of the followers of Huss assembled on a mountain a few miles from Prague under their leaders Zisca and Nicolas, where the latter administered to them the communion in both kinds. They had taken the field to oppose the Romish hierarchy with fire and sword; a bloody war ensued, which continued thirteen years with various success, and with many inhuman cruelties on both sides. The main body of the discontented Bohemians were at length satisfied with the cup in the sacrament, and with the administration of the ordinance in their own language.

Those who differed from the church of Rome, only in the affair of the communion in both kinds, were denominated Calixtines, from Calix, the Latin name for cup. Those who were more thorough in their opposition to the abominations of the church of Rome, and who resembled the Waldenses, in the great article of their faith, were called Taborites, from the circumstances of their having accommodated themselves with tents, when they took the field to oppose the papal power: the word *tabor*, in the Bohemian language, signifying tent.

The Taborites, besides the scriptural celebration of the sacrament, desired to see a real reformation of the church, and the establishment of purity of doctrine and discipline. But, after a long series of military confusion, they found themselves still a persecuted body of men; and those of them who had been inclined to have recourse to the sword, were gradually convinced that patient faith and perseverance in prayer are the proper arms of the christian soldier. Never was there a more striking instance of the inefficacy of carnal weapons in defending the church of Christ. By this long and bloody war, which the Bohemians carried on with great success, and with undaunted

courage and fortitude, they gained only two privileges, merely of an external nature in the administration of the Lord's supper. With these the majority of the people remained content, and still adhered to the papal abominations, while the real christians were exposed as much as ever to the persecutions of the church of Rome, and were not only abandoned, but also cruelly treated by their brethren.

In the mean time, Rokyzan, a Calixtine, was allured by the hopes of the archbishopric of Prague, to second the views of the papal party. He was elected archbishop in 1436, and labored to induce the Bohemians to be content without the cup, and in all other things to conform to the Romish doctrine and worship. Rokyzan, fearing he should lose his dignity, could not be prevailed on openly to oppose the Romish corruptions; he, however, advised the Hussites to edify one another in private, and gave them some good books for that purpose. He also obtained for them permission to withdraw to the lordship of Lititz, on the confines of Silesia and Moravia, and there to regulate their plan of worship according to their own consciences.

About the year 1453, a number of Hussites repaired to Lititz, and chose Michael Bradazius for their minister. He, with some assistants, under the direction of Gregory, who was in a great measure the founder of the unity of the Hussite brethren, held a conference in 1457, in which the plan of the Hussite church, or that of the United Brethren, was formed; idolatrous rites were prohibited, and a strictness of discipline, resembling that of the primitive christian church, was instituted. But in this they failed to promote the spirit of godliness to the degree they had expected, and this through the neglect of an accurate system of christian doctrines. As holy exercises of heart do take place in the view of truth, the inward life and vigor of their church did not correspond with the purity of its external system, and distressed consciences could not find among them that comfort and liberty which are necessary to the existence of godliness to any great extent. In one point, however, they proved themselves the real followers of Christ. They determined to make use of no carnal weapons for the defence of religion; and no more to suffer the name of Hussites to be disgraced by such unchristian methods as it formerly had been.

They were soon called to the exercise of that passive courage which they had professed. The increase of their congregations in Bohemia and Moravia, was beheld with suspicion both by Romish and Calixtine priests, and they were accused of having an intention to excite tumults and seize the government. The Hussites were then loaded with the calumnies of their enemies and suffered persecution. The United Brethren had hoped for



support in Rokyzan, whose ministry had formerly been useful to their souls; but he, then living in miserable grandeur, dearly purchased at the expense of a good conscience, afforded them none. The following extract of a letter which the brethren wrote to him, while they labored under the imputations of promoting needless divisions, will give the reader some idea of their principles and spirit:—"Your sermons have been highly grateful and pleasant to us. You earnestly exhorted us to flee from the horrible errors of Antichrist, revealed in these last days. You taught us that the devil introduced the abuses of the sacraments, and that men placed a false hope of salvation in them. You confirmed to us from the writings of the apostles and from examples of the primitive church, the true doctrine of those divine institutions. Being distressed in our consciences, and distracted by a variety of opinions, which prevailed in the church, we were induced to follow your advice, which was to attend the ministry of Peter Chelezitius, whose discourses and writings gave us a clear insight into christian truths; insomuch that when we saw your life and practice were at variance with your doctrine, we were constrained to entertain doubts concerning your religious character. When we conversed with you on this occasion, your answer was to this effect, 'I know that your sentiments are true; but, if I should patronize your cause, I must incur the same infamy and disgrace which you have.'—When we understood that you would desert us, rather than relinquish the honors of the world, having no refuge but in God, we implored him to make known to us the mystery of his will. As a gracious Father, he hath looked upon our afflictions, and hath heard our prayers. Trusting in our God, we have assembled ourselves in the unity of the faith by which we have been justified through Jesus Christ, and of which we were made partakers in conformity to the image of his death, that we might be the heirs of eternal life. Do not imagine, that we have separated ourselves from you on account of certain rites and ceremonies instituted by men; but on account of evil and corrupt doctrines. For if we could, in connexion with you, have preserved the true faith of Jesus Christ our Lord, we never should have made this separation."

Thus does it appear that the Hussite brethren were not mere schismatics, but properly reformed protestants, who separated from the church of Rome on account of the essentials of godliness, and because, in that church, they could not preserve the genuine faith of the gospel, and purity of worship. And the constancy with which they endured persecution, showed that they had not received the grace of God in vain. For they were declared unworthy of the common rights of subjects; and in the

depth of winter, were driven out of the cities and villages, with the forfeiture of all their effects. The sick were thrown into the open fields, where many perished with cold and hunger.— Various sorts of torture were inflicted on the brethren: numbers were barbarously murdered, and many died in the prisons.

During these melancholy scenes, Gregory, nephew of Rokyzan, was distinguished by his zeal, fortitude and charity. To these virtues he added prudence and discretion, of which he gave a remarkable instance. The governor of Prague, apprehending danger to the brethren to be at hand, had the kindness to warn Gregory to withdraw from that place, which he accordingly did. Some of the brethren were disgusted at this conduct, and boasted that the rack was their breakfast, and the flames their dinner. Some of these men, however, failed on the trial, and recanted to save their lives; though of the lapsed, some bemoaned their fall, and recovered by repentance. Gregory himself, on another occasion underwent with patience the tortures of the rack. In the extremity of his suffering he fell into a swoon, and was believed to have expired. His uncle Rokyzan hastened to the prison at the news, and lamented over him in these words, “My dear Gregory, I would to God I were where thou art.” So strong was the power of conscience still in this unhappy archbishop! But Gregory recovered, and was preserved to the church to a very advanced age.

The brethren having heard of the sensibility discovered by Rokyzan, addressed themselves to him again; but his answers were of the same kind as formerly. He was determined not to suffer persecution; and they in their farewell letter, said to him with more zeal than discretion, “thou art of the world, and wilt perish with the world.” The persecution took a different turn; the Hussites were no longer tortured, but were driven out of the country; where they were obliged to hide themselves in mountains and woods, and to live in the wilderness. In this situation, in 1467, they came to a resolution to form a church among themselves, and to appoint their own ministers. In 1480, they received a great increase of their numbers from the accession of Waldensian refugees, who escaped out of Austria, where Stephen, the last bishop of the Waldenses in that province, was burnt alive, and where the vehemence of persecution no longer allowed this people to live in security. A union was easily formed between the Waldenses and Hussites, on account of the similarity of their sentiments and manners. The refugees, however, found their situation but little meliorated by a junction with a people, who were obliged to conceal themselves in thickets and in clefts of rocks; and who, to escape detection by the smoke, made no fires except in the night, when they read the



word of God and prayed. Their sufferings were great. Rokyzan in his latter days, persecuted them, and died in despair about the year 1471.

In 1481, the Hussites were banished from Moravia, but in six years afterwards they returned into that country. In the beginning of the 16th century, they had 200 congregations in Bohemia and Moravia. Their most violent persecutors were the Calixtines, who, for the most part, resembled the papists, except in that from which their name was derived.

Hence closes, for the present, the history of the Hussites, who doubtless as a body of men, feared God and served him in the gospel of his Son. They also maintained a degree of discipline among themselves vastly superior to that of any other who bore the christian name, except the churches of the Waldenses. Both of these, however, defective in evangelical **LIGHT**. But God in mercy was then hastening an exhibition of this, in the reformation, which, after we shall have very briefly surveyed the principal events of the 15th century; must engage our attention.

The most remarkable events of this period, appear to have been directed by Divine Providence with a subserviency to the reformation.

The Turks had become very formidable in the East, and were extending their conquests to the West. Europe, though greatly oppressed by their persevering cruelties, neither humbled itself before God, nor took any measures to check their ambition.—But God was then preparing the way to bring order out of confusion, and light out of darkness. Many learned men, on account of the troubles in the East, emigrated from Greece into Europe, where they revived the study of letters, and hereby prepared the way for the demolition of idolatry and superstition. About the year 1440, the inestimable art of printing was invented. Learning began to be cultivated with vast ardor; classical knowledge was greatly increased. Learned men were furnished with critical skill and ingenuity, of which they availed themselves in the instruction of the ignorant. By the labors of the learned Erasmus, who arose about this time, monastic superstition received a wound which has never been healed.

Thus, under the care of Divine Providence, materials were collected for that beautiful edifice which soon began to arise. In the 15th century, the great value and use of these materials scarcely appeared; the same corruptions, both of faith and practice, which have so often been described, still prevailed in all their horrors.

In the mean time, there were some individuals, who, though not connected with any particular christian societies, evinced

the power of godliness. Among these was Thomas Rhedon, a Frenchman, who, having gone to Rome, to improve his understanding in religious concerns, found the corruptions of that venal city astonishingly great, and that the habitation of St. Peter had even become a den of thieves. His zealous spirit was stirred within him, to give an open testimony to evangelical truth. By continual preaching he incurred the hatred of the ruling powers, was degraded from the priesthood, and burnt, four years after his arrival at Rome. In 1499, Jerom Savonarola, an Italian monk, with two friars, Dominic and Sylvester, were burnt at Florence for preaching the doctrine of free justification through faith in Christ.

Vincent Ferrer, though bred in the midst of darkness, and connected with the worst of ecclesiastical characters, was a shining model of piety. At the age of forty-two he began to preach with great fervor in every town from Avignon towards Valentia. His word is said to have been powerful among the Jews, the Mahometans, and others. He labored abundantly in Spain, France, Italy, England, Scotland, and Ireland; and by the desire of Henry V. made Normandy and Britanny the theatre of his labors during the last two years of his life. He died at the age of 62.

The following is a quotation from his book on spiritual life, and will give an idea of his piety: "Do you desire to study to advantage? Consult God more than books, and ask him humbly, to make you understand what you read. Study drains the mind and heart. Go from time to time to be refreshed at the feet of Christ under his cross. Some moments of repose there give fresh vigor and new light: interrupt your study by short, but fervent ejaculations. Science is the gift of the Father of lights. Do not consider it as attainable merely by your own mind and industry."

Bernardin of Sienna, who must close this concise review of the 15th century, was born in the year 1380, and on account of his uncommon zeal in preaching, was called "the burning coal." He gave this advice to clergymen, "Seek first the kingdom of God, and the Holy Ghost will give you a wisdom which no adversary can withstand." This excellent man expressed an earnest wish to be able to cry out with a trumpet through the world, "How long will ye love simplicity?"



## CHAPTER XVII.

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### SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH PREVIOUS TO THE REFORMATION.—OF DOCTRINES, RITES, CEREMONIES, &c. IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.—OF THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY.—HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY, &c.—REFORMATION IN ENGLAND.—REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND, IRELAND, THE LOW COUNTRIES, &c.—OF THE OTHER SECTS WHICH APPEARED IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.—OF LEARNING AND LEARNED MEN IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

THE situation of the Roman pontiffs was singular at the commencement of this century. They had not, according to the apparent state of things, the smallest reason to apprehend any opposition to their pretensions, or rebellion against their authority; since those alarming commotions, which had been excited in the preceding ages by the Waldenses and Albigenses, and lately by the Bohemians, were entirely suppressed, and had yielded to the united powers of the council and the sword.—Such of the Waldenses as yet remained, lived contented under the difficulties of extreme poverty in the vallies of Piedmont, and proposed to themselves no higher earthly felicity, than that of leaving to their descendants that wretched and obscure corner of Europe, which separates the Alps from the Pyrenian mountains, while the handful of Bohemians, who survived the ruin of their faction, and still persevered in their opposition to the Roman yoke, had neither strength nor knowledge adequate to any new attempt, and therefore, instead of inspiring terror, became objects of contempt.

Alexander VI. was succeeded in the pontificate by Pius III. who, in less than a month after his election, was deprived, by death, of his new dignity; and the vacant chair was obtained,

by fraud and bribery, by Julius II. To the other odious vices with which this man dishonored the pontificate, may be added the most savage ferocity, the most despotic vehemence of temper, and the most extravagant and frantic passion for war. He began his military enterprises by entering into a war with the Venetians, after having strengthened his cause by an alliance with the emperor and the king of France. He then laid siege to Ferrara; and, at length, turned his arms against his former ally, the French monarch, in conjunction with the Venetians, Spaniards, and Swiss, whom he had drawn into this war, and engaged in his cause by an offensive league. His whole pontificate, indeed, was one continued scene of military tumult, nor during his life did he suffer Europe to enjoy one moment's tranquillity.

From this dreadful cloud which was suspended over Europe, some rays of light, however, seemed to break forth, which promised a better state of things, and gave some reason to expect a reformation in the church. Lewis XII, king of France, provoked by the insults he had received from this violent pontiff, meditated revenge, and even caused a medal to be struck, with a menacing inscription, expressing his resolution to overturn the power of Rome, which was represented by the title of Babylon on this coin. Several cardinals also, encouraged by the protection of this monarch and the emperor Maximilian I. assembled, in the year 1511, a council at Pisa, with an intention to set bounds to the tyranny of Julius, and to correct and reform the errors and corruptions of a superstitious church. The pope, on the contrary, relying on his own strength, and on the power of his allies, beheld these threatening appearances without the least concern, and even treated them with mockery and contempt. He did not, however, neglect the proper methods of rendering ineffectual the efforts of his enemies, and therefore gave orders for a council to meet in the palace of the Lateran, in the year 1512, in which the decrees of the council of Pisa were condemned and annulled in the most injurious and insulting terms. This condemnation would, undoubtedly, have been followed with the most formidable anathemas against Lewis and other princes, had not death snatched away the enterprising pontiff, in 1512, in the midst of his ambitious and vindictive projects.

He was succeeded, in the year 1513, by Leo X. of the family of Medicis. This pontiff was a protector of men of learning, and was himself learned. He was a lover and a patron of the arts. His time was divided between conversation with men of letters, and pleasure. He had an invincible aversion to whatever was accompanied with solicitude and care, and discovered



the utmost impatience under events of that nature. He did not, however, neglect the grand object which the generality of his predecessors had so much at heart, the promoting and advancing the opulence and grandeur of the Roman see. He was careful that nothing should be transacted in the council of the Lateran, which Julius had assembled and left sitting, that had the least tendency to favor the reformation of the church. He went still farther; and in conference with Francis I. king of France, at Bologna, engaged that monarch to abrogate the Pragmatic Sanction, so long odious to the popes of Rome, and to substitute in its place another body of laws, more advantageous to the papacy, which were imposed upon his subjects under the title of the Concordate, and received with the utmost indignation and reluctance.

The principal transactions of the six immediate successors of Leo will be found in a succeeding chapter, which treats of the reformation. Let it suffice for the present to remark, that they were the melancholy witnesses of the dismemberment of the papal dominion, for the maintenance of which, they, however, contended with zeal at least, if not with policy. Of the popes who followed the establishment of the reformed religion, Pius V. a man of a severe and melancholy disposition, rendered himself remarkable by a bull, which he published against Elizabeth, queen of England, degrading her from her dignity, and exhorting her subjects to revolt against her; and Gregory XIII. openly commanded the massacre of the Protestants in France. Sixtus V. was the son of a poor peasant on the borders of Ancona, but was possessed of a most ambitious mind, and proved a severe master and a troublesome neighbor. His best quality was a love of letters. He caused the version of the Bible called the Vulgate, as corrected by the council of Trent, to be printed in 1589, as the only authentic version of the sacred scriptures.—The three succeeding popes enjoyed that dignity only a few weeks; and on the 26th of February, 1592, Clement VIII. was elected, whose pontificate was distinguished by a famous dispute concerning Grace; which for some time divided and harassed the church of Rome.

The public worship of the Romish church consisted, in this age, of only a pompous round of external ceremonies, and much more adapted to dazzle the eye than to affect the heart. The number of those, who were at all qualified to administer public instruction to the people, was not very considerable; and their discourses, which contained little more than fictitious reports of miracles and prodigies, insipid fables, wretched quibbles, and illiterate jargon, deceiving instead of instructing the multitude. Several of these sermons are yet extant, which it is impossible

to read without indignation and contempt. Those declaimers, who, on account of their gravity of manners, or their supposed superiority in wisdom and knowledge, held the most distinguished rank, had a common-place set of subjects allotted to them, on which they were constantly exercising the power of their eloquence. These subjects were the authority of the church, and the obligations of obedience to her decisions; the virtues and merits of the saints, and their credit at the tribunal of heaven; the dignity, glory, and love of the blessed Virgin; the efficacy of relics; the duty of adorning churches, and endowing monasteries; the necessity of these good works (as that phrase was then understood) to salvation; the intolerable flames of purgatory, and the utility of indulgences. Such were the subjects which employed the zeal and labors of the most eminent doctors of this century. Nor was the restoration of letters sufficient to revive in mankind a sense of their own dignity, or to recover them from the miserable bondage to which through ignorance they had imperceptibly subjected themselves, and in which they were now partly retained by the extended arm of persecution.

The prodigious swarms of monks, that overspread Europe in the course of this century, occasioned universal murmurs and complaints. Such, however, was the genius of the age, that they would have remained undisturbed, had they taken the smallest pains to preserve any remains even of that external decency and religion which distinguished them in former times. But the Benedictine and other monkish fraternities, who were invested with the privilege of possessing certain lands and revenues, broke through all restraint, made the worst possible use of their opulence; and, forgetful of the gravity of their character, and of the laws of their order, rushed headlong into the shameless practice of every vice. The mendicant orders, and particularly those who followed the rules of St. Dominic and St. Francis, though perhaps not borne away by the general torrent of licentiousness, lost their credit in a different manner; for their rusticity, their superstitions, their ignorance, and cruelty, alienated from them the minds of the people, and effectually diminished their reputation. They had the most barbarous aversion to the arts and sciences, and expressed an abhorrence of those learned and eminent men, who endeavored to open the paths of science to the pursuits of the studious youth, who recommended the culture of the mind, and attacked the barbarism of the age in their writings and conversation.

In the course of this century, the internal government of the church of Rome underwent some not unimportant alterations, a considerable part of which may be ascribed to the influence of



the reformation by Luther. One of the most remarkable of these events was the establishment of the order of Jesuits, a body, whose influence on ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs has been more considerable than that of any religious order that ever appeared within the pale of the christian church. When men take a view of the rapid progress of this society towards wealth and power; when they contemplate the admirable prudence with which it has been governed; when they attend to the persevering and systematic spirit with which its schemes have been carried on; they are apt to ascribe such a singular institution to the superior wisdom of its founder, and to suppose that he had formed and digested his plan with profound policy. But the Jesuits, as well as the other monastic orders, are indebted for the existence of their order, not to the wisdom of their founder, but to his enthusiasm. Ignatio Loyola was a fanatic, distinguished by extravagancies in sentiment and conduct, no less incompatible with the maxims of reason, than repugnant to the spirit of religion. The wild adventures and visionary schemes, in which his enthusiasm engaged him, equal any thing recorded in the legends of the Romish saints; but are unworthy of notice in history.

Prompted by this fanatical spirit, or incited by the love of power and distinction, from which such pretenders to superior sanctity are not exempt, Loyola was ambitious of becoming the founder of a religious community. The plan, which he formed of its constitution and laws, was suggested, as he gave out, by the immediate inspiration of heaven. But notwithstanding this high pretension, his design met at first with violent opposition. The pope, to whom Loyola had applied for the sanction of his authority to confirm the institution, referred his petition to a committee of cardinals. They represented the establishment to be unnecessary as well as dangerous, and Paul refused to grant his approbation. At last, Loyola removed all his scruples, by an offer which it was impossible for any pope to resist. He proposed, that besides the three vows of poverty, of chastity, and of monastic obedience, which are common to all the orders of regulars, the members of his society should take a fourth vow of obedience to the pope, binding themselves to go whithersoever he should command, for the service of religion, and without requiring any thing from the Holy See for their support. At a time when the papal authority had received such a shock by the revolt of so many nations from the Romish church; at a time when every part of the popish system was attacked with so much violence and success, the acquisition of a body of men, thus peculiarly devoted to the see of Rome, and whom it might set in opposition to all its enemies, was an object of the

highest consequence. Paul, instantly perceiving this, confirmed the institution of the Jesuits by his bull; granted the most ample privileges to the members of the society; and appointed Loyola to be the first general of the order.

The constitution and laws of the society were perfected by Laynez and Aquaviva, the two generals who succeeded Loyola, men far superior to their master in abilities, and in the science of government.

The professed object of almost all the monastic orders is to separate men from the world, and from any concern in its affairs. On the contrary, the Jesuits were taught to consider themselves as formed for action. They were chosen soldiers, bound to exert themselves continually in the service of God, and of the pope, his vicar upon earth. That they might have full leisure for this active service, they were totally exempted from those functions, the performance of which is the chief business of other monks. They appeared in no processions; they practised no rigorous austerities; they did not consume one half of their time in the repetition of tedious offices. But they were required to attend to all the transactions of the world, on account of the influence which these may have upon religion; they were directed to study the dispositions of persons in high rank, and to cultivate their friendship; and by the very constitution, as well as genius of the order, a spirit of action and intrigue was infused into all its members.

As the object of the society of Jesuits differed from that of the other monastic orders, the diversity was no less in the form of its government. The other orders are to be considered as voluntary associations, in which whatever affects the whole body is regulated by the common suffrage of all its members. The executive power is vested in the persons placed at the head of each convent, or of the whole society; the legislative authority resides in the community. Affairs of moment, relating to particular convents, are determined in conventual chapters; such as respect the whole order are considered in general congregations. But Loyola, full of the ideas of implicit obedience, which he had derived from his military profession, appointed that the government of his order should be purely monarchical. A general, chosen for life by deputies from the several provinces, professed power that was supreme and independent, extending to every person, and to every case. He, by his sole authority, nominated provincials, rectors, and every other officer employed in the government of the society, and could remove them at pleasure. In him was vested the sovereign administration of the revenues and funds of the order. Every member belonging



to it was at his disposal; and by his uncontrollable mandate, he could impose on them any task, or employ them in any service. To his commands they were required not only to yield outward obedience, but to resign to him the inclinations of their wills, and the sentiments of their minds. There is not in the annals of mankind any example of such absolute despotism, exercised not over monks confined in the cells of a convent, but over men dispersed among all the nations of the earth.

As the constitutions of the order vested in the general such absolute dominion over all its members, they carefully provided for his being perfectly informed with respect to the character and abilities of his subjects. Every novice, who offered himself as a candidate for entering into the order, was obliged to manifest his conscience to the superior, or to a person appointed by him; and in doing this was required to confess not only his sins and defects, but to discover the inclinations, the passions, and the bent of his soul. This manifestation was to be renewed every six months. The society, not satisfied with penetrating in this manner into the innermost recesses of the heart, directed each member to observe the words and actions of the novices; and he was bound to disclose every thing of importance concerning them to the superior. In order that this scrutiny into their character might be as complete as possible, a long noviciate was to expire, during which they passed through the several gradations of ranks in the society, and they must have attained the full age of thirty-three years before they could be admitted to take the final vows, by which they became professed members. In order that the general, who was the soul that animated and moved the whole society, might have under his eye every thing necessary to inform or direct him, the provincials and heads of the several houses were obliged to transmit to him regular and frequent reports concerning the members under their inspection. In these they descended into minute details with respect to the character of each person, his abilities, natural or acquired, his temper, his experience in affairs, and the particular department for which he was best fitted. These reports, when digested and arranged, were entered into registers kept on purpose, that the general might, at one comprehensive view, survey the state of the society in every corner of the earth; observe the qualifications and talents of its members; and thus choose, with perfect information, the instruments, which his absolute power could employ in any service for which he thought proper to destine them.

Unhappily for mankind, the vast influence which the order of Jesuits acquired, was often exerted with the most pernicious

effect. Such was the tendency of that discipline observed by the society in forming its members, and such the fundamental maxims in its constitution, that every Jesuit was taught to regard the interest of the society as the capital object, to which every consideration was to be sacrificed. This spirit of attachment to their order, the most ardent, perhaps, that ever influenced any body of men, is the characteristic principle of the Jesuits, and serves as a key to the genius of their policy, as well as to the peculiarities in their sentiments and conduct.

The other monastic orders underwent some changes in their constitution. Matthew de Bassi, a native of Italy, and a Franciscan of the more rigid class, persuaded himself in the year 1521, that he was divinely inspired for the purpose of restoring the primitive discipline of his order. He became the father of the *Capuchins*, who are a branch of the Franciscans, and derive their name from the sharp pointed *capuche* or cowl, which they added to the ordinary Franciscan habit. They differ from the others only in this, and in the profession of a higher degree of sanctity and severity. Another branch of the Franciscan order received the denomination of *Recollets*\* in France, *reformed Franciscans* in Italy, and *bare-footed Franciscans* in Spain. In 1532, they were furnished with a separate rule by Clement VII. and are called *Friars Minors of the strict observance*.

The first society of *regular Clerks* was formed in 1529, and called *Theatins*, from their founder John Peter Carassa, bishop of Theate in Naples, and afterwards pope, under the title of Paul IV. The distinguishing profession of this order is extreme poverty without even the resource of begging. In this age, so fertile in these noxious productions, the society of *Priests of the oratory* also sprung up. They derive their name from the oratory or cabinet of devotion, which Philip Neri, their founder, built at Florence, for himself and the companions of his studies. It is but justice to remark, that this order has been adorned by Baronius, Raynaldus, Laderchius, and many others respectable for their literary worth.

The zeal for reformation was not in this century confined to the male sex. Theresa, a Spanish lady of illustrious birth, in conjunction with Johannes Santa Crusa, made some zealous efforts for the improvement of the *Carmelites*. Her self-denying discipline not being, however, equally relished by the rest of the order, proved only a perpetual source of discord and uneasiness. The more austere part of the society was therefore separated

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\*So called from the faculty of *recollection*, by which they pretended to revive the rule of St. Francis. Formey.



from the others in 1580, and formed into a distinct order, under the name of the *bare-footed Carmelites*.

To overturn a system of religious belief founded on ancient and deep-rooted prejudices, supported by power, and defended with no less art than industry; to establish in its room doctrines of the most contrary genius and tendency; ad to accomplish all this, not by external violence or the force of arms, are operations which historians, the least prone to credulity and superstition, ascribe to that Divine Providence which, with infinite ease, can affect designs that to human sagacity appear impossible. The interposition of Heaven, in favor of the Christian religion at its first publication, was manifested by miracles and prophecies wrought and uttered in confirmation of it. Though none of the reformers possessed, or pretended to possess, these supernatural gifts, yet that wonderful preparation of circumstances which disposed the minds of men for receiving their doctrines, that singular combination of causes which secured their success, and enabled men destitute of power and of policy to triumph over those who employed against them extraordinary efforts of both, may be considered as no slight proof that the same hand, which planted the Christian religion, protected the reformed faith, and reared it, from beginnings extremely feeble, to an amazing degree of strength and maturity.

It was from causes seemingly fortuitous, and from a source very inconsiderable, that all the mighty effects of the reformation flowed. Leo X. when raised to the papal throne, found the revenues of the church exhausted by the vast projects of his two ambitious predecessors. His own temper, naturally liberal and enterprising, rendered him incapable of severe and patient economy, and his schemes for aggrandizing the family of Medicis, his love of splendor, and his munificence in rewarding men of genius, involved him daily in new expenses; in order to provide a fund for which, he tried every device that the fertile invention of priests had fallen upon, to drain the credulous multitude of their wealth. Among others, he had recourse to a sale of indulgences.\*

The right of promulgating these indulgences in Germany,

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\*The Romish church believe that pious persons may do works of supererogation, that is to say, more good works than are necessary for their own salvation. All such works, according to their doctrine, are deposited together with the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, in one inexhaustible treasury. The keys of this were committed to St. Peter, and to his successors the popes, who may open it at pleasure; and by transferring a portion of this superabundant merit to any particular person for a sum of money, may convey to him either pardon for his

together with a share in the profits arising from the sale of them, was granted to Albert, elector of Mentz and archbishop of Magdeburg, who, as his chief agent for retailing them in Saxony, employed Tetzels, a Dominican friar, of licentious morals, but of an active spirit, and remarkable for his noisy and popular eloquence. He, assisted by the monks of his order, executed the commission with great zeal and success, but with little discretion or decency; and though, by magnifying excessively the benefit of their indulgences, and by disposing of them at a very low price, they carried on for some time an extensive and lucrative traffic among the credulous and the ignorant; the extravagance of their assertions, as well as the irregularities in their conduct, came at last to give general offence. The princes and nobles were irritated at seeing their vassals drained of so much wealth, in order to replenish the treasury of a profuse pontiff; and men of piety regretted the delusion of the people. Even the most unthinking were shocked at the scandalous behaviour of Tetzels and his associates, who often squandered in drunkenness, gaming, and low debauchery, those sums which were piously bestowed in hopes of eternal happiness; and all began to wish that some check was given to this commerce, no less detrimental to society than destructive to religion.

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own sins, or a release for any one for whom he feels an interest, from the pains of purgatory. Such indulgences were offered as a recompense for those who engaged in the wars of the Crusades against the Infidels. Since those times the power of granting indulgences has been greatly abused in the church of Rome. Pope Leo X. finding that the sale of indulgences was likely to be lucrative, granted to Albert, elector of Mentz, and archbishop of Magdeburg, the benefit of the indulgences of Saxony and the neighboring parts, and farmed out those of other countries to the highest bidder; who, to make the best of their bargain, procured the ablest preachers to cry up the value of the commodity. The form of these indulgences were as follows:—"May our Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon thee, and absolve thee by the merits of his most holy passion. And I, by his authority, that of his blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, and of the most holy pope, granted and committed to me in these parts, do absolve thee, first from all ecclesiastical censures, in whatever manner they may have been incurred; then from all thy sins, transgressions, and excesses, how enormous soever they may be; even from such as are reserved for the cognizance of the Holy See, and as far as the keys of the holy church extend. I remit to you all punishment which you deserve in purgatory on their account; and I restore you to the holy sacraments of the church, to the unity of the faithful, and to that innocence and purity which you possessed at baptism: so that when you die, the gates of punishment shall be shut, and the gates of the paradise of delight shall be opened; and if you shall not die at present, this grace shall remain in full force when you are at the point of death. In the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost."



Such was the favorable juncture, when Martin Luther first began to question the efficacy of indulgences, and to declaim against the vicious lives and false doctrines of the persons employed in promulgating them. Luther was a native of Eisleben in Saxony, and, though born of poor parents, had received a learned education, during the progress of which he gave many indications of uncommon vigor and acuteness of genius. As his mind was naturally susceptible of serious impressions, and tinctured with somewhat of that religious melancholy which delights in the solitude and devotion of a monastic life, he retired into a convent of Augustin friars, and assumed the habit of that order. He soon acquired great reputation for his piety, his love of knowledge, and his unwearied application to study. He had been taught the scholastic philosophy and theology which were then in vogue, and wanted not penetration to comprehend all the niceties and distinctions with which they abound; but his understanding, naturally sound, soon became disgusted with those subtle and un instructive sciences, and sought for some more solid foundation of knowledge and of piety in the holy

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According to a book, called the Tax of the sacred Roman Chancery, in which are the exact sums to be levied for the pardon of each particular sin, some of the fees are thus stated: For Simony, 10s. 6d.—For Sacrilege, 10s. 6d.—For taking a false oath, 9s. 0—For robbing, 12s. 0—For burning a neighbor's house, 12s. 0—For defiling a virgin, 9s. 0—For murdering a layman, 7s. 6d.—For keeping a concubine, 10s. 6d.—For laying violent hands on a clergyman, 10s. 6d.

The terms in which the retailers of these abominable licenses described their advantages to the purchasers, and the arguments with which they urged the necessity of obtaining them, were so extravagant that they appear almost incredible. If any man, said they, purchase letters of indulgence, his soul may rest secure with respect to its salvation. The souls confined in purgatory, for whose redemption indulgences are purchased, as soon as the money is paid, instantly escape from that place of torment, and ascend into heaven. That the efficacy of indulgences was so great, that the most heinous sins would be remitted and expiated by them, and the person be freed both from punishment and guilt.—That the cross erected by the preachers of indulgences was equally efficacious with the cross of Christ. “Lo,” said they, “the heavens are open, if you enter not now, when will you enter? For twelve pence you may redeem the soul of your father out of purgatory; and are you so ungrateful that you will not rescue the soul of your parent from torment? If you had but one coat, you ought to strip yourself of that instantly, and sell it in order to purchase such benefit,” &c. It was against these preachers of licentiousness, and their diabolical conduct, that Luther first began to declaim.—Since the reformation, the popes have been more sparing in the exercise of this pretended power; although it is said they still carry on a trade with them to the Indies where they are readily purchased. It is likewise stated, that indulgences may still be obtained at Rome, but it is presumable that the purchases are less frequent.

scriptures. Having found a copy of the Bible, which lay neglected in the library of his monastery, he devoted himself to the study of it, with such eagerness and assiduity as astonished the monks, who were little accustomed to derive their theological notions from that source. The great progress which he made in this uncommon course of study, augmented so much the fame both of his sanctity and of his learning, that Frederic, elector of Saxony, having founded an university at Wittemberg on the Elbe, the place of his residence, Luther was chosen first to teach philosophy, and afterwards theology there; and was deemed the chief ornament of that society.

While Luther was at the height of his reputation and authority, Tetzel began to publish indulgences in the neighborhood of Wittemberg. As Saxony was not more enlightened than the other provinces of Germany, Tetzel met with prodigious success. It was with the utmost concern that Luther beheld the artifices of those who sold, and the simplicity of those who bought indulgences. His warm and impetuous temper did not suffer him long to conceal his opinions, or to continue a silent spectator of the delusion of his countrymen. From the pulpit in the great church at Wittemberg, he inveighed bitterly against the irregularities and vices of the monks who published indulgences; he ventured to examine the doctrines which they taught, and pointed out to the people the danger of relying for salvation upon any other means than those appointed by God in his word. The boldness and novelty of these opinions drew great attention, and being recommended by the authority of Luther's personal character, and delivered with a popular and persuasive eloquence, they made a deep impression on his hearers. Encouraged by the favorable reception of his doctrines, he wrote to Albert, elector of Mentz and archbishop of Magdeburg, to whose jurisdiction that part of Saxony was subject, and remonstrated warmly against the false opinions, as well as wicked lives of the preachers of indulgences; but he found that prelate too deeply interested in their success to correct their abuses. His next attempt was to gain the suffrage of men of learning. For this purpose he published ninety-five theses, containing his sentiments with regard to indulgences. These he proposed, not as points fully established, or of undoubted certainty, but as subjects of inquiry and disputation; he appointed a day, on which the learned were invited to impugn them, either in person or by writing; to the whole he subjoined solemn protestations of his high respect for the apostolic see, and of his implicit submission to its authority. No opponent appeared at the time prefixed; the theses spread over Germany with astonishing rapidity; they were read with the greatest eagerness; and all



admired the boldness of the man, who had ventured, not only to call in question the plenitude of papal power, but to attack the Dominicans, armed with all the terrors of inquisitorial authority.

The friars of St. Augustine, Luther's own order, gave no check to the publication of these uncommon opinions. Luther had, by his piety and learning, acquired extraordinary authority among his brethren; he professed the highest regard for the authority of the pope; his professions were at that time sincere; and as a secret enmity subsists among all the monastic orders of the Romish church, the Augustins were highly pleased with his invectives against the Dominicans, and hoped to see them exposed to the hatred and scorn of the people. His sovereign, the elector of Saxony, the wisest prince at that time in Germany, secretly encouraged his attempts, and flattered himself that this dispute among the ecclesiastics themselves might give some check to the exactions of the court of Rome, which the secular princes had long, though without success, been endeavoring to oppose.

Several theses appeared in opposition to the ninety-five published by Luther, and the arguments produced for his confutation were the sentiments of schoolmen, the conclusions of the canon law, and the decrees of popes. The decisions of judges so partial and interested, did not satisfy the people, who began to call in question the authority even of these venerable guides, when they found them standing in direct opposition to the dictates of reason, and the determinations of the divine law.

Meanwhile these novelties in Luther's doctrines, which interested all Germany, excited little attention and no alarm in the court of Rome. Leo, fond of elegant and refined pleasures, intent upon great schemes of policy, a stranger to theological controversies, and apt to despise them, regarded with the utmost indifference the operations of an obscure friar, who, in the heart of Germany, carried on a scholastic disputation in a barbarous style. Leo imputed the whole to monastic enmity and emulation, and seemed inclined not to interpose in the contest, but to allow the Augustins and Dominicans to wrangle about the matter with their usual animosity.

The solicitations, however, of Luther's adversaries, together with the surprising progress which his opinions made in different parts of Germany, roused at last the attention of the court of Rome, and obliged Leo to take measures for the security of the church against an attack that now appeared too serious to be despised. For this end he summoned Luther to appear at Rome, within sixty days, before the auditor of the chamber, and the

inquisitor-general, Prierias, who had written against him, whom he empowered jointly to examine his doctrines, and to decide concerning them. He wrote, at the same time, to the elector of Saxony, beseeching him not to protect a man whose heretical and profane tenets were so shocking to pious ears; and enjoined the provincial of the Augustins to check by his authority the rashness of an arrogant monk, which brought disgrace upon the order of St. Augustine, and gave offence and disturbance to the whole church.

From the strain of these letters, as well as from the nomination of a judge so prejudiced and partial as Prierias, Luther easily saw what sentence he might expect at Rome. He discovered, for that reason, the utmost solicitude to have his cause tried in Germany, and before a less suspected tribunal. The professors in the university at Wittemberg, anxious for his safety, wrote to the pope, and after employing several pretexts to excuse Luther from appearing at Rome, entreated Leo to commit the examination of his doctrines to some persons of learning and authority in Germany. The elector requested the same thing of the pope's legate at the diet of Augsburg; and as Luther himself, who at that time did not even entertain the smallest suspicion concerning the divine original of papal authority, had written to Leo a submissive letter, promising an unreserved compliance with his will, the pope gratified them so far as to empower his legate in Germany, Cardinal Cajetan, a Dominican, eminent for scholastic learning, and passionately devoted to the Roman see, to hear and determine his cause.

Luther, having obtained the emperor's safe conduct, immediately repaired to Augsburg. The cardinal received him with decent respect, and endeavored at first to gain upon him by gentle treatment: but thinking it beneath the dignity of his station to enter into any formal dispute with a person of such inferior rank, he required him, by virtue of the apostolic powers with which he was clothed, to retract his errors with regard to indulgences and the nature of faith; and to abstain, for the future, from the publication of new and dangerous opinions. Luther, fully persuaded of the truth of his own tenets, and confirmed in the belief of them by the approbation which they had met with among persons conspicuous both for learning and piety, was surprised at this abrupt mention of a recantation, before any endeavors were used to convince him that he was mistaken.—He had flattered himself that, in a conference concerning the points in dispute, with a prelate of such distinguished abilities, he should be able to remove many of those imputations with which the ignorance or malice of his antagonists had loaded him; but the high tone of authority that the cardinal assumed



extinguished at once all hopes of this kind, and cut off every prospect of advantage from the interview. His native intrepidity of mind, however, did not desert him. He declared with the utmost firmness, that he could not, with a safe conscience, renounce opinions which he believed to be true; nor should any consideration ever induce him to do what would be so base in itself, and so offensive to God. At the same time, he continued to express no less reverence than formerly for the authority of the apostolic see; he signified his willingness to submit the whole controversy to certain universities which he named, and promised neither to write nor preach concerning indulgences for the future, provided his adversaries were likewise enjoined to be silent with respect to them. All these offers Cajetan disregarded or rejected, and still insisted peremptorily on a simple recantation, threatening him with ecclesiastical censures, and forbidding him to appear again in his presence, unless he resolved instantly to comply with what he had required. This haughty and violent proceeding, as well as other circumstances, gave Luther's friends such strong reasons to suspect that even the imperial safe conduct would not be able to protect him from the legate's power and resentment, that they prevailed on him to withdraw secretly from Augsburg, and to return to his own country. But before his departure, he prepared a solemn appeal from the legate, ill-informed at that time concerning his cause from the pope, who indeed ought not to have committed a cause of this importance to an inferior agent.

Cajetan, enraged at Luther's abrupt retreat, and at the publication of his appeal, wrote to the elector of Saxony, complaining of both; and requiring him as he regarded the peace of the church, or the authority of its head, either to send that seditious monk a prisoner to Rome, or to banish him out of his territories. It was not from theological considerations that Frederic had hitherto countenanced Luther. His protection flowed almost entirely from political motives, and was afforded with great secrecy and caution. He had neither heard any of Luther's discourses, nor read any of his books; and though all Germany resounded with his fame, he had never once admitted him into his presence. But upon this demand which the cardinal made, it became necessary to throw off somewhat of his former reserve. He had been at great expense, and had bestowed much attention on founding a new university, an object of considerable importance to every German prince; and foreseeing how fatal a blow the removal of Luther would be to its reputation, he, under various pretexts, and with many professions of esteem for the cardinal, as well as of reverence for the pope, not only declined complying with either of his requests, but openly discovered great concern for Luther's safety.

The inflexible rigor, with which Cajetan insisted on a simple recantation, gave great offence to Luther's followers in that age. But it was impossible for the legate to act another part. The judges before whom Luther had been required to appear at Rome, without waiting for the expiration of the sixty days allowed him in the citation, had already condemned him as an heretic. Leo had, in several of his briefs and letters, stigmatized him as a child of iniquity, and a man given up to a reprobate sense. Nothing less, therefore, than a recantation could save the honor of the church, whose maxim it is, never, to abandon the smallest point that it has established, and which is even precluded by its pretensions to infallibility, from having it in its power to do so.

In this situation, Luther discovered no symptoms of timidity or remissness, but continued to vindicate his own conduct and opinions, and to inveigh against those of his adversaries with more vehemence than ever.

As every step, however, which was taken by the court of Rome, convinced Luther that Leo would soon proceed to the most violent measures against him, he had recourse to the only expedient in his power, in order to prevent the effect of the papal censures. He appealed to a great council, which he affirmed to be the representative of the catholic church, and superior in power to the pope, who, being a fallible man, might err, as St. Peter, the most perfect of his predecessors, had erred.

It soon appeared, that Luther had not formed rash conjectures concerning the intentions of the Romish church. A bull, of a date prior to his appeal, was issued by the pope, in which he magnified the virtue and efficacy of indulgences; he required all Christians to assent to what he delivered as the doctrine of the catholic church; and subjected those, who should hold or teach any contrary opinion, to the heaviest ecclesiastical censures.

Among Luther's followers, this bull, which they considered as an unjustifiable effort of the pope in order to preserve that rich branch of his revenue which arose from indulgences, produced little effect. But among the rest of his countrymen, such a clear decision of the sovereign pontiff against him, and enforced by such dreadful penalties, must have been attended with consequences very fatal to his cause, if these had not been prevented in a great measure, by the death of the emperor Maximilian, whom both his principles and his interest prompted to support the authority of the holy see. In consequence of this event, the vicariat of that part of Germany which is governed by the Saxon laws devolved to the elector of Saxony; and under the



shelter of his friendly administration, Luther not only enjoyed tranquillity, but his opinions were suffered, during the inter-regnum which preceded the election, to take root in different places, and to grow up to some degree of strength and firmness. At the same time, as the election of an emperor was a point more interesting to Leo than a theological controversy which he did not understand, and of which he could not foresee the consequences, he was so extremely solicitous not to irritate a prince of such considerable influence in the electoral college as Frederic, that he discovered a great unwillingness to pronounce the sentence of excommunication against Luther, which his adversaries demanded with the most clamorous importunity.

To these political views of the pope, as well as to his natural aversion to severe measures, was owing the suspension of any further proceedings against Luther for eighteen months. Perpetual negotiations, however, in order to bring the matter to some amicable issue, were carried on during that space. The manner in which these were conducted, having given Luther many opportunities of observing the corruption of the court of Rome, he began to utter some doubts with regard to the divine original of the papal authority. A public disputation was held upon this important question at Leipsic, between Luther and Eccius, one of his most learned and formidable antagonists; but it was as fruitless and indecisive as such scholastic combats usually prove.

Nor did this spirit of opposition to the doctrines and usurpations of the Romish church break out in Saxony alone; an attack no less violent, and occasioned by the same causes, was made upon them about this time in Switzerland. The Franciscans being entrusted with the promulgation of indulgences in that country, executed their commission with the same indiscretion and rapaciousness, which had rendered the Dominicans so odious in Germany. They proceeded, nevertheless, with uninterrupted success till they arrived at Zurich. There Zuinglius, a man not inferior to Luther in zeal and intrepidity, ventured to oppose them; and being animated with a republican boldness, he advanced with more daring and rapid steps to overturn the whole fabric of the established religion. The appearance of such a vigorous auxiliary, and the progress which he made, was at first matter of great joy to Luther. On the other hand, the decrees of the universities of Cologne and Louvaine, which pronounced his opinions to be erroneous, afforded great cause of triumph to his adversaries.

But the undaunted spirit of Luther acquired additional fortitude from every instance of opposition; and he began to shake the firmest foundations on which the wealth or power of the

church were established. Leo came at last to be convinced, that all hopes of reclaiming him by forbearance were vain; several prelates of great wisdom exclaimed no less than Luther's personal adversaries, against the pope's unprecedented lenity; the dignity of the papal see rendered the most vigorous proceedings necessary; the new emperor, it was hoped, would support its authority; nor did it seem probable that the elector of Saxony would so far forget his usual caution, as to set himself in opposition to their united power. The college of cardinals was often assembled in order to prepare the sentence with due deliberation, and the ablest canonists were consulted how it might be expressed with unexceptionable formality. At last, on the 15th of June, 1520, the bull, so fatal to the church of Rome, was issued. Forty-one propositions, extracted out of Luther's works, are therein condemned as heretical, scandalous, and offensive to pious ears; all persons are forbidden to read his writings, upon pain of excommunication; such as had any of them in their custody are commanded to commit them to the flames; he himself, if he did not, within sixty days, publicly recant his errors, and burn his books, is pronounced an obstinate heretic; is excommunicated, and delivered unto Satan for the destruction of his flesh; and all secular princes are required, under pain of incurring the same censure, to seize his person, that he might be punished as his crimes deserved.

The publication of this bull in Germany excited various passions in different places. Luther's adversaries exulted; his followers read Leo's anathemas with more indignation than terror. In some cities, the people violently obstructed the promulgation of the bull; in others, the persons who attempted to publish it were insulted, and the bull itself torn in pieces, and trodden under foot.\*

This sentence, which he had for some time expected, did not disconcert or intimidate Luther. After renewing his appeal to the general council, he published remarks upon the bull of excommunication; and being now persuaded that Leo had been guilty both of impiety and injustice in his proceedings against him, he boldly declared the pope to be that man of sin, or anti-christ, whose appearance is foretold in the New Testament; he declaimed against his tyranny and usurpations with greater violence than ever; he exhorted all Christian princes to shake off such an ignominious yoke; and boasted of his own happiness in being marked out as the object of ecclesiastical indignation, because he had ventured to assert the liberty of mankind. Nor did he confine his expressions of contempt for the papal power to words alone; Leo having, in execution of the bull, appointed Luther's books to be burnt at Rome, he, by way of retaliation,



assembled all the professors and students in the university of Wittenburg, and with great pomp, in presence of a vast multitude of spectators, cast the volumes of canon law, together with the bull of excommunication, into the flames; and his example was imitated in several cities in Germany. The manner in which he justified this action, was still more offensive than the action itself. Having collected from the canon law some of the most extravagant propositions with regard to the plenitude and omnipotence of the papal power, as well as the subordination of all secular jurisdiction to the authority of the holy see, he published these with a commentary, pointed out the impiety of such tenets, and their evident tendency to subvert all civil government.

After the death of Maximilian I. his grandson, Charles V. king of Spain, succeeded him in the empire, in the year 1519. Leo X. seized this occasion of putting the emperor in mind of his character as advocate and defender of the church, and demanding the exemplary punishment of Luther, who had rebelled against its sacred laws.

The vast and dangerous schemes which Francis I. king of France was forming against Charles, made it necessary for him to secure the friendship of the pope, and determined him to treat Luther with great severity, as the most effectual method of soothing Leo into a concurrence with his measures. His eagerness to accomplish this rendered him not unwilling to gratify the papal legates in Germany, who insisted that without any delay or formal deliberation, the diet, which was assembled at Worms, ought to condemn a man whom the pope had already excommunicated as an incorrigible heretic. Such an abrupt manner of proceeding, however, being deemed unprecedented and unjust by the members of the diet, they made a point of Luther's appearing in person, and declaring whether he adhered or not to those opinions which had drawn upon him the censures of the church. Not only the emperor, but all the princes through whose territories he had to pass, granted him a safe-conduct; and Charles wrote to him at the same time, requiring his immediate attendance on the diet, and renewing his promises of protection from any injury or violence. Luther did not hesitate one moment about yielding obedience, and set out for Worms, attended by the herald who had brought the emperor's letter and safe-conduct. While on his journey, many of his friends, whom the fate of Huss under similar circumstances, and notwithstanding the same security of an imperial safe-conduct, filled with solicitude, advised and intreated him not to rush wantonly into the midst of danger. But Luther, superior to such terrors, silenced them with this reply, "I am lawfully called,"

said he, "to appear in that city, and thither will I go in the name of the Lord, though as many devils, as there are tile on the houses, were there combined against me."

The reception he met with at Worms was such as he might have reckoned a full reward for all his labours, if vanity and the love of applause had been the principles by which he was influenced. Greater crowds assembled to behold him, than had appeared at the emperor's public entry; his apartments were daily filled with princes and personages of the highest rank and he was treated with all the respect paid to those who possess the power of directing the understanding and sentiments of other men; an homage, more sincere, as well as more flattering, than any which pre-eminence in birth or condition can command. At his appearance before the diet, he behaved with great decency and firmness. He readily acknowledged an excess of vehemence and acrimony in his controversial writings, but refused to retract his opinions, unless he were convinced of their falsehood; or consent to their being tried by any other rule than the word of God. When neither threats nor intreaties could prevail on him to depart from this resolution, some of the ecclesiastics proposed to imitate the example of the council of Constance, and, by punishing the author of this pestilent heresy, who was now in their power, to deliver the church at once from such an evil. This was opposed both by the members of the diet and by the emperor, and Luther was permitted to depart in safety. A few days after he left the city, a severe edict was published in the emperor's name, and by authority of the diet, depriving him, as an obstinate and excommunicated criminal, of all the privileges which he enjoyed as a subject of the empire, forbidding any prince to harbour and protect him, and requiring all to concur in seizing his person, as soon as the term specified in his safe-conduct was expired.

But this rigorous decree had no considerable effect, the execution of it being prevented, partly by the multiplicity of occupations which the commotions in Spain, together with the wars in Italy and the Low Countries, created to the emperor; and partly by a prudent precaution employed by the elector of Saxony. As Luther, on his return from Worms, was passing near Altenstein in Thuringia, a number of horsemen in masks rushed suddenly out of a wood, where the elector had appointed them to lie in wait for him, and surrounding his company, carried him, after dismissing his attendants, to Wartburg, a strong castle not far distant. There the elector ordered him to be supplied with every thing necessary or agreeable, but the place of his retreat was carefully concealed; until the fury of the present storm against him began to abate. In this solitude he remained



nine months, and exerted his usual vigor and industry in defence of his doctrines, or in confutation of his adversaries, publishing several treatises, which revived the drooping spirits of his followers.

During his confinement, his opinions continued to gain ground in every city in Saxony; and, the Augustins of Wittemburg, with the approbation of the university, and the connivance of the elector, ventured upon the first step towards an alteration in the established forms of public worship, by abolishing the celebration of private masses, and by giving the cup as well as the bread to the laity in administering the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

During his retirement at Wartburg, Luther received the intelligence that a solemn decree condemning his opinions had been published by the university of Paris, and that Henry VIII. of England, had written a treatise on the Seven Sacraments, in confutation of his opinions. Luther who was not overawed, either by the authority of the university, or the dignity of the monarch, soon published his animadversions on both, in a style no less vehement and severe than he would have used in confuting his meanest antagonist. A controversy, managed by disputants so illustrious, drew more general attention; and the doctrines of the reformers, in spite both of the civil and ecclesiastical powers combined against them, daily gained converts both in France and in England.

Luther was drawn from his retreat by the imprudence of Carlostadius, one of his disciples, who, animated with the same zeal, but possessed of less moderation, propagated wild and dangerous opinions, chiefly among the lower people. Encouraged by his exhortations, they rose in several villages of Saxony, broke into the churches with tumultuary violence, and destroyed the images with which they were adorned. Those irregular and outrageous proceedings were so repugnant to all the elector's cautious maxims, that, if they had not received a timely check, they could hardly have failed of alienating from the reformers a prince, no less jealous of his own authority, than afraid of giving offence to the emperor, and other patrons of the ancient opinions. Luther, sensible of the danger, without waiting for Frederic's permission, returned to Wittemberg. Happily for the reformation, the veneration for his person and authority were still so great, that his appearance alone suppressed that spirit of extravagance which began to seize his party. Carlostadius and his fanatical followers, struck dumb by his rebukes, submitted at once, and declared that they heard the voice of an angel, not of a man.

Before Luther left his retreat, he had begun to translate the

bible into the German tongue, an undertaking for which he was well qualified: he had a competent knowledge in the original languages, a thorough acquaintance with the style and sentiments of the inspired writers; and though his compositions in Latin were rude and barbarous, he was reckoned a great master of the purity of his mother tongue. By his own assiduous application, together with the assistance of Melancthon, and several other of his disciples, he finished part of the New Testament in the year 1522. It was read with wonderful avidity and attention by persons of every rank. They were astonished at discovering how contrary the precepts of the author of our religion are to the inventions of those priests who pretended to be his vicegerents; and having now in their hand the rule of faith, they thought themselves qualified, by applying it, to judge of the established opinions, and to pronounce when they were conformable to the standard, or when they departed from it. The great advantages arising from Luther's translation of the bible encouraged the advocates for reformation, in the other countries of Europe, to imitate his example, and to publish versions of the scriptures in their respective languages.

About this time, Nuremburg, Frankfort, Hamburgh, and several other cities in Germany, of the first rank, openly embraced the reformed religion, and by the authority of their magistrates abolished the mass, and other superstitious rites of popery. The Dukes of Brunswick and Lunenburgh, the Prince of Anhalt and other distinguished personages, became avowed patrons of Luther's opinions, and countenanced the preaching of them among their subjects.

Leo X. had been succeeded in the pontificate by Adrian VI. a native of Utrecht, and a man of some probity and candour. He could not, however, behold this growing defection without concern; and his first care, after his arrival in Italy, had been to deliberate with the cardinals, concerning the proper means of putting a stop to it. He was profoundly skilled in scholastic theology, and having been early noticed on that account, he still retained such an excessive admiration of the science to which he was first indebted for his reputation and success in life, that he considered Luther's invectives against the schoolmen, particularly Thomas Aquinas, as little less than blasphemy. At the same time his own manners being extremely simple, and uninfected with any of the vices which reigned in the court of Rome, he was as sensible of its corruptions as the reformers themselves, and viewed them with no less indignation. The brief which he addressed to the diet of the empire assembled at Nuremburg, November, 1522, and the instructions which he gave to Cheregato, the nuncio whom he sent thither, were



framed agreeable to these views. On the one hand, he condemned Luther's opinions with more asperity than Leo had ever used; he severely censured the princes of Germany for suffering him to spread his pernicious tenets, by their neglecting to execute the edict of the diet at Worms, and required them, if Luther did not instantly retract his errors, to destroy him with fire as a gangrened and incurable member. On the other hand, he, with great candour, acknowledged the corruptions of the Roman court to be the source from which had flowed most of the evils the church now felt or dreaded; he promised to exert all his authority towards reforming those abuses; and he requested of them to give him their advice with regard to the most effectual means of suppressing that new heresy which had sprung up among them.

The members of the diet, after praising the pope's pious and laudable intentions, excused themselves for not executing the edict of Worms, by alleging that the prodigious increase of Luther's followers, as well as the aversion to the court of Rome among their other subjects, on account of its innumerable exactions, rendered such an attempt not only dangerous, but impossible. They affirmed that the grievances of Germany, which arose from impositions no less real than intolerable, called now for some new and efficacious remedy; and, in their opinion, the only remedy, which afforded them any hope of seeing the church restored to soundness and vigour, was a general council. Such a council, therefore, they advised him, after obtaining the emperor's consent, to assemble without delay, in one of the great cities of Germany.

The nuncio, more artful than his master, was startled, at the proposition of a council; and easily foresaw how dangerous such an assembly might prove, at a time when many openly denied the papal authority, and the reverence and submission yielded to it visibly declining among all. For that reason he applied his utmost address, in order to prevail on the members of the diet to proceed themselves with greater severity against the Lutheran heresy, and to relinquish their proposal concerning a general council to be held in Germany. They, perceiving the nuncio to be more solicitous about the interest of the Roman court, than the tranquility of the empire, or purity of the church, remained inflexible, and continued to prepare the catalogue of their grievances to be presented to the pope. The nuncio, that he might not be the bearer of a remonstrance so disagreeable to his court, left Nuremberg abruptly, without taking leave of the diet.

The secular princes accordingly drew up the list (so famous in the German annals) of an hundred grievances, which the em-

peror imputed to the iniquitous dominion of the papal see. They complained of the sums exacted for dispensations, absolutions, and indulgences; of the expense arising from the law-suits carried by appeal to Rome; of the innumerable abuses occasioned by reservations, commendams, and annates; of the exemption from civil jurisdiction which the clergy had obtained; of the arts by which they brought all secular causes under the cognisance of the ecclesiastical judges: of the indecent and profligate lives which not a few of the clergy led; and of various other particulars. In the end they concluded, that, if the holy see did not speedily deliver them from these intolerable burdens, they would employ the power and authority with which God had entrusted them, in order to procure relief.

Instead of such severities against Luther and his followers as the nuncio had recommended, the *recess* or edict of the diet contained only a general injunction to all ranks of men to wait with patience for the determinations of the council which was to be assembled, and in the mean time not to publish any new opinions contrary to the established doctrines of the church; together with an admonition to all preachers to abstain from matters of controversy in their discourses to the people, and confine themselves to the plain and instructive truths of religion.

While these affairs were in agitation, pope Adrian died, and was succeeded on the 23d of November 1523, by the cardinal de Medicis, who assumed the name of Clement VII. This pontiff excelled Adrian as much in the arts of government, as he was inferior to him in purity of life and uprightness of intention. Having obtained his election by very uncanonical means, he was afraid of an assembly that might subject it to a scrutiny which it could not stand, and determined therefore to elude the demands of the Germans, both with respect to the calling of a council, and reforming abuses in the papal court. For this purpose he made choice of cardinal Campeggio, an artful man, as his nuncio to the diet of the empire, assembled again at Nuremberg.

Campeggio without taking notice of what had passed in the last meeting, exhorted the diet to execute the edict of Worms with vigour, as the only effectual means of suppressing Luther's doctrines. The diet, in return, desired to know the pope's intentions concerning the council, and the redress of the hundred grievances. The former, the nuncio endeavored to elude by general declarations of the pope's resolution to pursue such measures as would be for the greatest good of the church. With regard to the latter, as Adrian was dead before the catalogue of grievances reached Rome, and as of consequence it had been regularly laid before the present pope, Campeggio declined ma-



king any definite answer to them in Clement's name; though, at the same time, he observed that their catalogue of grievances contained many particulars extremely indecent and undutiful, and that the publishing it by their own authority was highly disrespectful to the Roman see. In the end, he renewed his demand of their proceeding with vigour against Luther and his adherents. But though an ambassador from the emperor, who was at that time very solicitous to gain the pope, warmly seconded the nuncio, with many professions of his master's zeal for the honor and dignity of the papal see, the *recess* of the diet was conceived in terms of almost the same import with the former, without enjoining any additional severity against Luther and his party.

Before he left Germany, Campeggio, in order to soothe the people, published certain articles for the amendment of some disorders and abuses which prevailed among the inferior clergy; but this partial reformation, which fell so far short of the expectation of the Lutherans, gave no satisfaction, and produced little effect.

The marriage of Luther in the year 1526, with Catharine Boria, a nun of noble family who had fled from the cloister, was far from meeting with general approbation. Luther himself was sensible of the impression which it had made to his disadvantage; but being satisfied with his own conduct, he bore the censure of his friends, and the reproaches of his adversaries, with his usual fortitude.

This year the reformation lost its first protector, Frederick, elector of Saxony; but the blow was the less sensibly felt, as he was succeeded by his brother John, a more avowed and zealous, though a less able patron of Luther and his doctrines.

Another event happened about the same time, which occasioned a considerable change in the state of Germany. The Teutonic order being driven from their settlements in the east, had been obliged to return to their native country. Their zeal and valour were too impetuous to remain long inactive. They invaded, as was already intimated, the province of Prussia, the inhabitants of which were still idolators; and having completed the conquest of it, held it many years as a fief depending on the crown of Poland. Fierce contests arose during this period, between the grand masters of the order, and the kings of Poland. Albert, a prince of the house of Brandenburg who was elected grand master in the year one thousand five hundred and eleven, engaging keenly in this quarrel, maintained a long war with Sigismund, king of Poland; but having become an early convert to Luther's doctrines, this gradually lessened his zeal for the interests of his fraternity, so that he took the opportunity of

the confusions in the empire, and the absence of the emperor, to conclude a treaty with Sigismund greatly to his own private emolument. By it that part of Prussia, which belonged to the Teutonic order, was erected into a secular and hereditary duchy, and the investiture of it granted to Albert, who, in return, bound himself to do homage for it to the kings of Poland as their vassal. Immediately after this, he made public profession of the reformed religion, and married a princess of Denmark.

In this state of affairs, the patrons of popery projected a war against the Lutherans, who in their turn prepared for defence. In the mean time the edict, assembled in Spire in the year 1526, at which Ferdinand, the emperor's brother presided, ended in a manner more favorable to the friends of the reformation, than they could naturally expect. The emperor's ambassadors at this diet were ordered to use their most earnest endeavours for the suppression of all farther disputes concerning religion, and to insist upon the rigorous execution of the sentence which had been pronounced at Worms against Luther and his followers. The greater part of the German princes resolutely opposed this motion, declaring that they could not execute that sentence, nor come to any determination with respect to the doctrines by which it had been occasioned, before the whole matter was submitted to the cognisance of a general council lawfully assembled; alleging that the decisions of controversies of this nature belonged properly to such a council, and to it alone. This opinion, after long and warm debates, was adopted by a great majority, and at length, consented to by the whole assembly; when it was unanimously agreed to present a solemn address to the emperor, beseeching him to assemble, without delay, a free and general council; and it was also agreed, that, in the mean time, the princes and states of the empire should, in their respective dominions be at liberty to manage ecclesiastical matters in the manner they should think most expedient; yet so as to be able to give to God and to the emperor an account of them.

Nothing could be more favorable to those who had the cause of pure and genuine religion at heart, than a resolution of this nature. The emperor was at this time, so entirely engaged in regulating the troubled state of his dominions in France, Spain, and Italy, as rendered it impossible for him to turn his attention to the affairs of Germany in general, and still less to the state of religion in particular. He was besides little disposed to favour the pope, who after the death of Francis I. at the battle of Pavia, filled with many uneasy apprehensions of the growing power of the emperor in Italy, had entered into a confederacy with the French and Venetians against Charles V. This imprudent measure, therefore, inflamed the resent-



ment and indignation of Charles to such a degree, that he abolished the papal authority in his Spanish dominions, made war upon the pope in Italy, laid siege to Rome in the year 1527, blocked up Clement in the Castle of St. Angelo, and exposed him to the most severe and contumelious treatment. These critical events, together with the liberty granted to the diet at Spire, were prudently and industriously improved by the friends of the reformation to the advantage of their cause, and to the augmentation of their number. Several princes being delivered now from their restraint, renounced publicly the superstition of Rome, and introduced among their subjects the same forms of religious worship, and the same system of doctrine, which had been received in Saxony. Others, though placed in such circumstances as discouraged them from acting in an open manner against the interests of the Roman Pontiff, were, however, far from discovering the smallest opposition to those who withdrew the people from his despotic yoke. In the mean time Luther and his fellow-laborers, particularly those who were with him at Wittemberg, by their writings, their instructions, their admonitions and councils, inspired the timorous with fortitude, dispelled the doubts of the ignorant, fixed the principles and resolution of the floating and inconstant, and animated all the friends of genuine Christianity with a spirit suitable to the grandeur of their undertaking.

But this tranquility was not of long duration. It was interrupted by a new diet, assembled in the year 1529, in the same place by the emperor, after he had appeased the commotions and troubles which had employed his attention in several parts of Europe, and concluded a treaty of peace with Clement VII. The power which had been granted by the former diet to every prince, of managing ecclesiastical matters as they thought proper, until the meeting of a general council, was now revoked by a majority of votes; and every change was declared unlawful, which should be introduced into the doctrine, discipline, or worship, of the established religion, before the determination of the approaching council was known.

The elector of Saxony, the marquis of Brandenburg, the langrave of Hesse, the dukes of Lunenburgh, the prince of Anhalt, together with the deputies of fourteen imperial or free cities, entered a solemn protest against this decree, as unjust and impious. On that account they were distinguished by the name of **PROTESTANTS** an appellation which has since been applied indiscriminately to all sects, of whatever denomination, which have revolted from the Roman see. The Protestants next sent ambassadors into Italy, to lay their grievances before the emperor, from whom they met with the most discouraging

reception. Charles was at that time in close union with the pope, and solicitous to attach him to his interest.

The emperor set out for Germany, having already appointed a diet of the empire to be held at Augsburgh. In his journey towards that city, he had many opportunities of observing the disposition of the Germans with regard to the points in controversy and found their minds every where so much irritated and inflamed, as convinced him, that nothing tending to severity or rigour ought to be attempted, until all other measures proved ineffectual. He made his public entry into Augsburgh with extraordinary pomp; and found there such a full assembly of the members of the diet, as was suitable both to the importance of the affairs which were to come under their consideration, and to the honor of an emperor, who, after a long absence, returned to them crowned with reputation and success. His presence seems to have communicated to all parties an unusual spirit of moderation and desire of peace. The elector of Saxony would not permit Luther to accompany him to the diet, lest he should offend the emperor by bringing into his presence a person excommunicated by the pope, and who had been the author of all those dissensions which it now appeared so difficult to compose. At the emperor's desire, all the Protestant princes forbade the divines who accompanied them, to preach in public during their residence in Augsburg. For the same reason they employed the gentle and Pacific Melancthon, to draw up a confession of their faith, expressed in terms as little offensive to the Roman Catholics, as a regard for truth would permit. Melancthon executed a task so agreeable to his natural disposition, with great moderation and address. The creed which he composed, known by the name of the *Confession of Augsburg*,\* from the place where it was presented, was read publicly in the diet. A controversy ensued between the reformed and popish divines; but, notwithstanding the interference of the emperor to reconcile the contending parties, such insuperable barriers were placed between the two churches, that all hopes of bringing about a coalition seemed utterly desperate. The endeavours of Charles among the princes were equally unproductive of success. Such was the excess of their zeal, that it overcame all attachment to their political interest, which is commonly the predominant motive among princes. The chiefs of the Protestants, though solicited separately by the emperor, and allured by the promise or prospect of those advantages, which it was known they were most solicitous to attain, refused with a fortitude highly worthy of imitation, to abandon what they deemed the cause of God, for the sake of an earthly acquisition.

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\*This confession is the same in substance with that of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, with the one exception, the possibility of falling from a state of justification, which Cumberland Presbyterians disbelieve.



Every scheme in order to gain or disunite the Protestant party proving abortive, nothing now remained for the emperor but to take some vigorous measure towards asserting the doctrines and authority of the established church. To effect this, a severe decree against the Protestants was enacted in the diet; and the utmost danger to the reformers arose on every side. Luther by his exhortations and writings revived the desponding hopes of his associates, and his exhortations made the deeper impression upon them, as they were greatly alarmed at that time by the account of a combination among the popish princes of the empire for the maintenance of the established religion, to which Charles himself had acceded. Convinced that their own safety, as well as the success of their cause, depended upon union, they assembled at Smalkalde, where they concluded a league of mutual defence against all aggressors, by which they formed the Protestant states of the empire into one regular body, and beginning already to consider themselves as such, they resolved to apply to the kings of France and England, and to implore them to patronize and assist their new confederacy.

Francis, the king of France, and avowed rival of the emperor, without seeming to countenance their religious opinions, determined secretly to cherish those sparks of political discord; and the king of England, highly incensed against Charles, in complaisance for whom, the pope had long retarded, and now openly opposed his long solicited divorce from his queen, Catharine of Arragon, was equally disposed to strengthen a league which might be rendered so formidable to the emperor. But his favorite project of the divorce led him into such a labyrinth of schemes and negociations, and he was, at the same time, so intent on abolishing the papal jurisdiction in England, that he had no leisure for foreign affairs. This obliged him to rest satisfied with giving general promises, together with a small supply of money, to the confederates of Smalkalde.

Meanwhile, many circumstances convinced Charles that this was not a juncture when the expatriation of heresy was to be attempted by violence and rigour; and that, in compliance with the pope's inclinations, he had already proceeded with imprudent precipitation. Negotiations were, therefore, carried on by his direction with the elector of Saxony and his associates; and after many delays, terms of pacification were agreed upon at Nuremberg, and ratified solemnly in the diet at Ratisbon. In this treaty it was stipulated, that universal peace be established in Germany, until the meeting of a general council, the convocation of which within six months the emperor shall endeavor to procure; that no person shall be molested on account of religion; that a stop shall be put to all processes begun by the imperial chamber against Protestants, and the sentences already

to their detriment shall be declared void. On their part the Protestants engaged to assist the emperor with all their forces in resisting the invasion of the Turks. Thus by their firmness, by their unanimity, and by their dexterity in availing themselves of the emperor's situation, the Protestants obtained terms which amounted almost to a toleration of their religion; and the Protestants of Germany, who had hitherto been viewed only as a religious sect, came henceforth to be considered as a political body of no small importance.

About the beginning of August in this year, 1532, the elector of Saxony died, and was succeeded by his son John Frederic; the reformation, however, rather gained than lost by that event.

During those important transactions in Germany, which have been just related, the glorious dawn of reformation gradually arose upon other nations. Some of the most considerable provinces of Europe had already broken their chains, and openly withdrawn themselves from the discipline of Rome and the jurisdiction of its pontiff. The reformed religion was propagated in Sweden, soon after Luther's rupture with Rome, by one of his disciples. The zealous efforts of this missionary were powerfully seconded by that valiant and public-spirited prince, Gustavus Vasa Ericson. But as the religious opinions of the Swedes were in a fluctuating state, and their minds divided between their ancient superstitions, and the doctrine of Luther, Gustavus wisely avoided all vehemence and precipitation in spreading the new doctrine, and proceeded in this important undertaking, in a manner suitable to the principles of the reformation, which he regarded as diametrically opposed to compulsion and violence. The first object of his attention was the instruction of his people in the sacred doctrines of the scriptures, and he spread abroad through the kingdom the Swedish translation of the Bible, which had been made by Olaus Petri. After having taken every proper means to effect his design, Gustavus, in the assembly of the states of Westeraas, recommended the doctrine of the reformers with such zeal, wisdom, and piety, that it was unanimously resolved, that the plan of reformation proposed by Luther, should have free administration among the Swedes. This resolution was principally owing to the firmness and magnanimity of Gustavus, who declared publicly, that he would lay down his sceptre and retire from his kingdom, rather than rule a people enslaved by the orders and authority of the pope, and more controlled by the tyranny of their bishops, than by the laws of the kingdom. From this time the papal empire in Sweden was entirely overturned, and Gustavus was declared the head of the church.

The reformation was also received in Denmark, as early as



the year 1521, in consequence of the ardent desire discovered by Christian or Christiern II. of having his subjects instructed in the principles and doctrines of Luther. The kingdom of France was not inaccessible to the reformation. Margaret, queen of Navarre, and sister of Francis I., the implacable enemy and perpetual rival of Charles V. was extremely favourable to the new doctrine. The auspicious patronage of this illustrious princess encouraged several pious and learned men to propagate the principles of the reformation in France, and even to erect several protestant churches in that kingdom. It is manifest from the most authentic records, that so early as the year 1523, there were, in several of the provinces of that country, multitudes of persons, who had conceived the utmost aversion both against the doctrine and tyranny of Rome, and, among these, many persons of rank and dignity, and even some of the episcopal order. As their numbers increased from day to day, and troubles and commotions were excited in several places on account of religious differences, the authority of the monarch and the cruelty of his officers intervened, to support the doctrine of Rome by the edge of the sword and the terrors of the gibbet; and on this occasion many persons, eminent for their piety and virtue, were put to death with the most unrelenting barbarity. This cruelty, however, instead of retarding rather accelerated the progress of the reformation.

About this time the famous Calvin began to draw the attention of the public, but more especially the queen of Navarre. He was born at Noyon in Picardy, on the 10th of July, 1509, and was bred to the law, in which, as well as in all the other branches of literature then known, his studies were attended with the most rapid success. Having acquired the knowledge of religion, by a diligent perusal of the holy scriptures, he began early to perceive the necessity of reforming the established system of doctrine and worship. His zeal exposed him to various perils, and the connection he had formed with the friends of the reformation, whom Francis I. was daily committing to the flames, placed him more than once in imminent danger, from which he was delivered by the good offices of the excellent queen of Navarre. To escape, however the impending storm, he retired to Basil, where he published his Christian Institutions; and prefixed to them that famous dedication to Francis I. which has attracted the admiration of succeeding ages, and which was designed to soften the unrelenting fury of that prince against the Protestants.

The doctrine of Luther made a considerable, though perhaps a secret, progress in Spain, Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, and the Netherlands, and had in all these countries many friends, of

whom several repaired to Wittemberg, to improve their knowledge and enlarge their views under such an eminent master.

In the year 1539, George, Duke of Saxony died; and his death was an event of great advantage to the reformers. From the first dawn of the reformation, he had been its enemy as avowedly as the electoral princes were its protectors. But by his death without issue, his succession fell to his brother Henry, whose attachment to the Protestant religion surpassed if possible, that of his predecessor to popery. Henry no sooner took possession of his new dominions, than he invited some Protestant divines, and among them Luther himself, to Leipsic; and, by their advice and assistance, he overturned in a few week the whole system of ancient rites, establishing the full exercise of the reformed religion, with the universal applause of his subjects, who had long wished for this change, which the authority of their duke alone had prevented.

After a long succession of negociations and delays, a general council was convoked at Trent in the year 1545, which appeared extremely hostile to the Protestant cause. As soon as the confederates of Smalkalde received information of the opening of the council, they published a long manifesto, containing a protest against its meetings, together with the reasons which induced them to decline its jurisdiction. The pope and emperor, on their part, were so little solicitous to quicken or add vigour to its operations, as plainly discovered that some object of greater importance occupied and interested them.

The Protestants were not inattentive spectators of the motions of the sovereign pontiff and of Charles V. and a variety of information, corroborating all which their own jealousy or observation led them to apprehend, left little reason to doubt of the emperor's hostile intentions. Under this impression, the deputies of the confederates of Smalkalde assembled at Frankfort, and by communicating their intelligence and sentiments to each other, reciprocally heightened their sense of the impending danger. But their union was not such as their situation required, or the preparation of their enemies rendered necessary.

To calm the apprehensions of the Protestants, Charles had recourse to duplicity; and the military preparations he had already made were represented by Granvelle the imperial minister, as designed only as a defence against the attacks of the English and French. But the emperor's actions did not correspond with these professions. For, instead of appointing men of known moderation and pacific temper, to appear in defence of the Catholic doctrines, at a conference which had been agreed on, he made choice of fierce bigots, attached to their own sys-



tem with a blind obstinacy, which rendered all hope of a reconciliation desperate. Malvenda, a Spanish divine, who took upon him the conduct of the debate on the part of the Catholics, managed it with all the subtle dexterity of a scholastic metaphysician, more studious to perplex his adversaries than to convince them, and more intent on palliating error than on discovering truth. The Protestants, filled with indignation as well at his sophistry, as at some regulations which the emperor endeavored to impose on his disputants, broke off the conference abruptly, being now fully convinced that in all his late measures, the emperor could have no other view than to amuse them, and to gain time for ripening his own schemes.

While appearances of danger daily increased, and the tempest which had been so long gathering was ready to break forth in all its violence against the Protestant church, Luther was saved, by a seasonable death, from feeling or beholding its destructive rage. Having gone, though in a declining state of health, and during a rigorous season, to his native city of Eisleben, in order to compose, by his authority, a dissension among the counts of Mansfield, he was seized with a violent inflammation in his stomach, which in a few days put an end to his life, February 18th, 1546, in the 63d year of his age. As he was raised up by Providence to be the author of one of the greatest and most interesting revolutions recorded in history, there is not any person perhaps whose character has been drawn with such opposite colours. It is, however, his own conduct, not the undistinguishing censure or the exaggerated praise of his contemporaries, which ought to regulate the opinions of the present age concerning him. Zeal for what he regarded as truth, undaunted intrepidity to maintain his own system, abilities both natural and acquired to defend his principles, and unwearied industry in propagating them, and virtues which shine so conspicuous in every part of his behaviour, that even his enemies must have allowed him to have possessed in an eminent degree. To these may be added, with equal justice, such purity and even austerity of manners, as became one who assumed the character of a reformer; such sanctity of life as suited the doctrine which he delivered; and such perfect disinterestedness as affords no slight presumption of his sincerity. Superior to all selfish considerations, a stranger to the elegancies of life, and despising its pleasures, he left the honors and emoluments of the church to his disciples, remaining satisfied himself in his original state of professor in the university, and pastor of the town of Wittenberg, with the moderate appointment annexed to the offices. His extraordinary qualities were allayed with no inconsiderable mixture of human frailty and human passions.

These, however, were of such a nature, that they cannot be imputed to any malevolence or corruption of heart, but seem to have taken their rise from the same source with many of his virtues. His mind, forcible and vehement in all its operations, roused by great objects, or agitated by violent passions broke out on many occasions, with an impetuosity which astonishes men of feebler spirits, or such as are placed in a more tranquil situation. By carrying some praise-worthy disposition to excess, he bordered sometimes on what is culpable, and was often betrayed into actions which exposed him to censure.

Towards the close of Luther's life, though without any perceptible diminution of zeal or abilities, the infirmities of his temper increased upon him, so that he grew more impatient of contradiction. Having lived to be a witness of his own amazing success; to see a great portion of Europe embrace his doctrines; and to shake the foundation of the papal throne, before which the mightiest monarchs had trembled, he discovered on some occasions, symptoms of vanity. He must have been, indeed, more than man, if, upon contemplating all that he actually accomplished, he had never felt any sentiment of this kind. But he was, in word and in deed, a Christian.

Some time before his death he felt his strength declining, his constitution being worn out by a prodigious multiplicity of business, added to the labour of discharging his ministerial function with unremitting diligence, to the fatigue of constant study, besides the composition of works as voluminous as if he had enjoyed uninterrupted leisure and retirement. His natural intrepidity did not forsake him at the approach of death; his last conversation with his friends was concerning the happiness reserved for good men in future life, of which he spoke with the fervour and delight natural to one who expected and wished to enter soon upon the enjoyment of it. His funeral was celebrated, by order of the elector of Saxony, with extraordinary pomp. He left several children by his wife Catharine Boria, who survived him. Towards the end of the last century, there were in Saxony some of his decendants in decent and honourable stations.

The emperor, meanwhile, pursued the plan of dissimulation with which he had set out; but such events soon occurred, as staggered the credit which the Protestants had given to his declarations. The council of Trent, though still composed of a small number of Italian and Spanish prelates, without a single deputy from many of the kingdoms which it assumed a right of binding by its decrees, being ashamed of its long inactivity, proceeded now to settle articles of the greatest importance, Having begun with examining the first and chief point in con-



troversy between the church of Rome and the reformers, concerning the rule which should be held as supreme and decisive in matters of faith, the council, by its infallible authority, determined, "That the books, to which the designation of *apocryphal* hath been given, are of equal authority with those which were received by the Jews and primitive Christians into the sacred canon; that the traditions handed down from the apostolic age, and preserved in the church, are entitled to as much regard as the doctrines and precepts which the inspired authors have committed to writing; that the Latin translation of the scriptures, made or revised by St. Jerome, and known by the name of the *Vulgate* translation, should be read in churches, and appealed to in the schools, as authentic and canonical:" and against all who disclaimed the truth of these tenets, anathemas were denounced in the name and by the authority of the Holy Ghost.

Several circumstances conspired to convince the protestants that the council was ready to condemn their opinions, and the pope to punish all who embraced them, and that Charles had determined upon their extirpation. In this situation they expostulated with the emperor, and proposed several projects for settling the matter in dispute; but their memorial was received by him with a contemptuous smile. Having already taken his final resolution, and perceiving that nothing but force could compel them to acquiesce in it, he dispatched the cardinal of Trent to Rome, to conclude an alliance with the pope, the terms of which were already agreed on; he commanded a body of troops, levied on purpose in the Low Countries, to advance towards Germany; he gave commissions for raising men in different parts of the empire; he warned John and Albert of Brandenburg, that now was the proper time of exerting themselves, in order to rescue their ally, Henry of Brunswick from captivity.

The protestants, in this disagreeable situation, had recourse to negotiations. The powers to which they addressed themselves were the state of Venice, the Helvetic body, the kings of France and England; but in all these applications they were successively disappointed. Notwithstanding, however, their ill success in their negotiations with foreign courts, the confederates found no difficulty at home, in bringing a sufficient force into the field. By a concurrence of causes, they were enabled to assemble in a few weeks an army composed of seventy thousand foot and fifteen thousand horse, provided with a train of one hundred and twenty canon, eight hundred ammunition wagons, eight thousand beasts of burden, and six thousand pioneers.

The number of their troops, as well as the amazing rapidity with which they had assembled them, astonished the emperor,

and filled him with the most disquieting apprehensions. He was; indeed, in no condition to resist such a mighty force. Shut up in Ratisbon, a town of no great strength, whose inhabitants, being mostly Lutherans, would have been more ready to betray than to assist him, with only three thousand Spanish foot, and about five thousand Germans who had joined him from different parts of the empire, he must have been overwhelmed by the approach of such a formidable army, which he could not fight, nor could he even hope to retreat from it in safety. The pope's troops, though in full march to his relief, had hardly reached the frontiers of Germany; the forces which he expected from the Low Countries had not yet begun to move, and were even far from being complete. His situation, however, called for more immediate succour, nor did it seem practicable for him to wait for such distant auxiliaries with whom his junction was so precarious.

But it happened fortunately for Charles, that the confederates did not avail themselves of the advantage which lay so full in their view. They addressed themselves to him by manifestoes, when they should have assailed him with arms. On the other hand, Charles, though in such a perilous situation as might have inspired him with moderate sentiments, appeared as inflexible and haughty as if his affairs had been in the most prosperous state. His only reply was to publish the ban of the empire against the elector of Saxony and landgrave of Hesse, their leaders, and against all who should dare to assist him.

A few days after the ban of the empire was published, the confederates, according to the custom of that age, sent a herald to the imperial camp with a solemn declaration of war against Charles, to whom they no longer gave any other title than that of pretended emperor, and renounced all allegiance, homage, or duty which he might claim, or which they had hitherto yielded to him.

The war was carried on with various success for the greater part of the campaign, when the perfidy of prince Maurice of Saxony gave a decided turn in favour of the emperor. His view was manifestly from the first the increase of his dominions, which were too small for his aspiring mind. With this view, he had repaired to Ratisbon in the month of May, under pretext of attending the diet; and with the most mysterious secrecy concluded a treaty, in which he engaged to assist the emperor as a faithful subject; and Charles, in return, stipulated to bestow on him all the spoils of the elector of Saxony, his dignities as well as territories. History hardly records any treaty that can be considered as a more manifest violation of the most powerful principles which ought to influence human actions. Maurice, a



professed protestant, at a time when the belief of religion, as well as zeal for its interests, took strong possession of every mind, binds himself to contribute his assistance towards carrying on a war which had manifestly no other object than the extirpation of the protestant doctrines. He engages to take arms against his father-in-law, and to strip his nearest relation of his honours and dominions. He joins a dubious friend against a known benefactor, to whom his obligations were both great and recent. Nor was the prince who ventured upon all this one of those audacious politicians, who, provided they can accomplish their ends, and secure their interest, avowedly disregard the most sacred obligations, and glory in contemning whatever is honourable or decent. Maurice's conduct, if the whole must be ascribed to policy, was more artful and masterly; he executed his plan in all its parts, and yet endeavoured to preserve, in every step which he took, the appearance of what was fair, and virtuous, and laudable. It is probable, from his subsequent behaviour, that, with regard to the protestant religion at least, his intentions were upright, that he fondly trusted to the emperor's promises for its security, but that, according to the fate of all who rely too much in policy, in attempting to deceive others, he himself was in some degree deceived.

His first care, however, was to keep the engagements, into which he had entered with the emperor, closely concealed: and so perfect a master was he in the art of dissimulation, that the confederates, notwithstanding his declining all connection with them, and his remarkable assiduity in paying court to the emperor, seemed to have entertained no suspicion of his designs. Even the elector of Saxony, when he marched at the beginning of the campaign to join his associates, committed his dominions to Maurice's protection, which he, with an insidious appearance of friendship, readily undertook. But scarcely had the elector taken the field, when Maurice began to consult privately with the king of the Romans how to invade those very territories, with the defence of which he was entrusted. Soon after, the emperor sent him a copy of the imperial ban denounced against the elector and langrave. As he was next heir to the former, and particularly interested in preventing strangers from getting his dominions into their possession, Charles required him, not only for his own sake, but upon the allegiance and duty which he owed to the head of the empire, instantly to seize and detain in his hands the forfeited estates of the elector; warning him, at the same time, that if he neglected to obey these commands, he should be held as accessory to the crimes of his kinsman, and be liable to the same punishment.

The artifice, which it was probable Maurice himself suggest-

ed, afforded him a flimsy pretext for seizing the dominions of his friend and benefactor, which, with some sacrifices to appearances, he presently put in practice.

In the fatal battle of Mulhausen, the 24th of April, 1547, the elector of Saxony was taken prisoner. He was treated by the emperor with the utmost insolence; and, contrary to the laws of the empire and the faith of treaties, who brought him to a mock trial, not before the states of the empire, but before a court-martial composed of Spanish and Italian officers. He was condemned to die by this unjust tribunal, and received the sentence with a magnanimity, which can only be exhibited by those who are actuated by the principles of true religion. It was his earnest desire to submit to his fate, and preserve his dominions untouched for his posterity; but the tears and entreaties of his wife and family prevailed over this resolve, and he resigned his electoral dignity, to which was annexed the severe condition of remaining the emperor's prisoner for life. The perfidious Maurice was put in possession of his electoral dominions; though this sacrifice was not made without reluctance by the ambitious emperor.

The unfortunate landgrave, terrified by the fate of the elector, was induced to commit himself to the emperor's clemency; but he too found that, after the most ignominious submission, he was detained a prisoner contrary to the faith of the emperor, expressly pledged: and he and the degraded elector of Saxony were exhibited to the populace in all the journals of the emperor, the melancholy witnesses and ornaments of his insolent triumph.

The unbounded ambition of the emperor, and the jealousy and resentment of the pope, operated at this dangerous crisis for the preservation of the reformed religion in Germany. While both agreed that all religious disputes should be submitted to the general council, it was warmly debated where this council should sit, at Trent where it was originally convened, or at Bologna. When Charles found himself unable to overcome the obstinacy of the pope, he published that system of faith which is known by the name of the *Interim*, because it professed to contain only temporary regulations, till a free general council should be held; and he had influence enough with the diet, which was sitting at Augsburg, to obtain a kind of extorted or tacit consent that it should be received and enforced as a general system of faith throughout the German empire.

This system, which contained almost every article of the popish tenets expressed with studied ambiguity, proved equally disgusting to papists and protestants. While the Lutheran divines fiercely attacked it on the one hand, the general of the Dominicans with no less vehemence impugned it on the other.



But at Rome, as soon as the contents of the Interim came to be known, the indignation of the courtiers and ecclesiastics rose to the greatest height.

The pope, however, whose judgment was improved by longer experience in great transactions, as well as by a more extensive observation of human affairs, was astonished that a prince of such superior sagacity as the emperor should be so intoxicated with a single victory, as to imagine that he might give law to mankind, and decide even in those matters, with regard to which they are most impatient of dominion.

The emperor, on the other hand, fond of his own plan, adhered to his resolution of carrying it into full execution. But though the elector Palatine, the elector of Brandenburg, and Maurice, seemed ready to yield implicit obedience to whatever he should enjoin, he met not every where with a like obsequious submission. John, marquis of Brandenburg Anspach, although he had taken part with great zeal in the war against the confederates of Smalkale, refused to renounce doctrines which he held to be sacred; and reminding the emperor of the repeated promises which he had given his protestant allies, of allowing them the free exercise of their religion, he claimed, in consequence of these, to be exempted from receiving the Interim. Some other princes also ventured to mention the same scruples, and to plead the same indulgence. But on this, as on other trying occasions, the firmness of the elector of Saxony was most distinguished, and merited the highest praise. Charles well knowing the authority of his example with all the protestant party, laboured with the utmost earnestness, to gain his approbation of the Interim, and attempted alternately to work upon his hopes and his fears. But he was alike regardless of both. After having declared his fixed belief in the doctrines of the reformation, he refused to abandon the principles for which he had so long contended. By this magnanimous resolution, he set his countrymen a pattern of conduct, so very different from that which the emperor wished him to have exhibited to them, that it drew upon him fresh marks of his displeasure, and he was deprived of every consolation which could mitigate the rigours of a close and tedious confinement. The langrave of Hesse, his companion in misfortune, did not maintain the same constancy, but wrote to the emperor, offering not only to approve of the Interim, but to yield an unreserved submission to his will in every other particular. Charles, however, who knew that whatever course the langrave might hold, neither his example nor authority would prevail on his children or subjects to receive the Interim, paid no regard to his offers. He was kept confined as strictly as ever; and while he suffered the cruel mortification of

having his conduct set in contrast with that of the elector, he derived not the smallest benefit from the mean step which exposed him to such deserved censure.

But it was from the free cities that Charles experienced the most violent opposition. He therefore proceeded, contrary to the laws of the German empire, to seize them by force, and to new-model their constitutions. While these affairs were transacting, Paul III. expired at Rome, in 1549, and the cardinal di Monte, who had been the confidential minister of Paul, was elected in his stead, and assumed the title of Julius III. With some difficulty this pontiff was prevailed upon by Charles to re-assemble the council at Trent. But a different scene now opened to the eyes of Europe. Maurice, who had formerly sacrificed so much to his inordinate ambition, became secretly jealous of the growing tyranny of the emperor; and desirous of retaining the power which he himself had obtained; his first measure was to protest in the warmest terms against the council to be called at Trent, unless the subjects already examined there were re-debated, and the protestants allowed a deciding voice in the council. His next was to conclude a secret treaty with Henry II. of France, for the purpose of reducing the emperor; and in the beginning of March, 1552, he declared war against that monarch, in support of the protestant religion. Charles was soon ignominiously expelled from Germany; the council of Trent dissolved itself with consternation, and was not able to re-assemble for the space of ten years.

After these events, so glorious to the protestant cause, the peace of religion was concluded at Passau, on the 2d of August, 1552. By this treaty the landgrave was restored to liberty; the Interim was declared null and void; and both protestants and catholics were secured in the free exercise of their religion, until the meeting of a diet, which was to be summoned within six months, to determine amicably the present disputes. Maurice did not long survive to enjoy the fruits either of his newly-acquired glory, or of his former treachery and usurpation. He was killed in the battle of Sieverhausen, fighting against Albert of Brandenburg, (who had not acceded to the peace of Passau,) on the 9th of June, 1553, in the 32d year of his age, and in the 6th after his attaining the electoral dignity. It is to be regretted, that the degraded elector derived no advantage from this event. The states of Saxony, with that ingratitude and inconsistency which distinguishes the proceedings of every mob, preferred the claim of Augustus, the brother of Maurice, by the descendants of whom the electorate is still possessed.

It was nearly three years before the troubles of Germany would permit a diet to be assembled. In the year 1555, how-



ever, this famous and eagerly-expected diet met at Augsburg, and was opened by Ferdinand, in the emperor's name; and after many debates and intrigues, a recess was at length framed and passed on the 25th of September, which completely confirmed the peace of religion. The following are the chief articles which this act of legislature contained. That such princes and cities as have declared their approbation of the confession of Augsburg, shall be permitted to profess the doctrine and exercise the worship which it authorizes, without interruption or molestation from any power or person whatsoever; that the protestants, on their part, shall give no disquiet to the princes and states who adhere to the tenets and rites of the church of Rome; that, for the future, no attempt shall be made towards terminating religious differences, but by the gentle and pacific methods of persuasion and conference; that the popish ecclesiastics shall claim no spiritual jurisdiction in such states as receive the confession of Augsburg; that such as had seized the benefices or revenues of the church previous to the treaty of Passau, shall retain possession of them, and be liable to no prosecution in the imperial chamber on that account; that the supreme civil power in every state shall have a right to establish what form of doctrine and worship it shall deem proper, and, if any of its subjects refuse to conform to these, shall permit them to remove with all their effects whithersoever they shall please; that if any prelate or ecclesiastic shall hereafter abandon the Romish religion, he shall instantly relinquish his dioces or benefice, and it shall be lawful for those in whom the right of nomination is vested, to proceed immediately to an election, as if the office were vacant by death or translation, and to appoint a successor of undoubted attachment to the ancient system.

From causes not less fortuitous than those which produced the reformation in Germany, must the reformation in England be deduced; for though the commencement of that event is referred to the measures of Henry VIII. yet it certainly never obtained his full concurrence, and a persecution of the reformed opinions marked almost every period of his reign. Educated by his father Henry VII. with uncommon care, the literary attainments of this monarch exceeded those of the generality of princes; and the scholastic divinity, so congenial to his vain and contentious temper, was prosecuted by him with unremitting industry. Thomas Aquinas became his favorite author, and the contempt with which Luther treated the dogmas of this writer, excited in Henry the warmest indignation and abhorrence. Impelled by resentment, he published a treatise upon the *Seven Sacraments*, in reply to the book concerning the Babylonish Captivity, written by Luther. This work was admired

by the multitude, extolled by the courtiers, and spoken of by the pope in full consistory, in terms only suited to the productions of immediate inspiration; and the zeal of the pious monarch was rewarded by the descendant of St. Peter, with the title (still enjoyed by his successors) of *Defender of the Faith*.

A perfect agreement amongst the most formidable opponents of Luther was however prevented by various circumstances. Both public and private interest induced Henry to oppose the designs of the emperor Charles V.; and the offence he had given to his favourite cardinal Wolsey, in opposing his views to the papacy, contributed to the declaration of the monarch in favour of the antagonists of Charles. It is probable that the hatred and resentment of the cardinal towards the house of Spain contributed in no inconsiderable degree to his ready concurrence in the real or fictitious scruples of Henry, against further cohabitation with his wife Catharine of Arragon, the widow of his deceased brother. The greater part of the bishops obediently acquiesced in the project of the king and his favourite scheme for obtaining a divorce, and all, except the bishop of Rochester, declared their opinions against the legality of the marriage, though it had received the sanction of a papal dispensation. Wolsey flattered the king with speedily obtaining a favourable decision from the court of Rome; and, had no other interest intervened, it is probable, from the facility with which all dispensations from that court were procured, that Henry would not have been disappointed. But the pope, though under obligations to Henry, was in the power of the emperor. The reiterated entreaties and presents of Wolsey at length obtained the appointment of cardinal Campeggio as legate, who was invested with powers to examine and afterwards to annul the marriage; and to this commission was added the authority for indulging cardinal Wolsey in his long-meditated scheme of appropriating the revenues of several monasteries to the support of colleges, bishoprics, and cathedral churches.

Previous to the arrival of the legate, the queen had engaged the assistance of the emperor, her nephew, in her cause. The English and imperial factions at Rome sedulously endeavoured to obtain a decision favourable to the views of their respective courts; and the embarrassed pontiff, to avoid giving positive offence to either party, dispatched orders to Campeggio to protract the decision. The legate secretly favoured the party of the emperor, and contrived delays little adapted to the desires of the king, who was violently enamoured with the beautiful and accomplished Anna Bullen, whom he ardently wished to espouse. Every artifice and intrigue which could be suggested by policy were employed to procure a decretal bull annulling



the marriage; but the pope was inflexible, and it was not till after repeated delays that the legate began the process in England. The unhappy Catharine refused to defend her cause in a court in which she was certainly prejudged, and appealed to the pope, who, by the influence of the emperor, cited Henry to appear at Rome: but this summons the monarch absolutely refused.

Extremely irritated by the protraction of his suit, Henry became disgusted with cardinal Wolsey for not having accomplished the business of the divorce. In this situation of affairs, a project was proposed by Dr. Cranmer, fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, that the king should engage the principal European divines, and the universities, to examine the legality of his marriage; and if they, from the evidence of scripture, pronounced it unlawful, that he should then declare the marriage null, as the dispensation of the pope could not be sufficient to abrogate the law of God. This measure introduced Cranmer into the confidence of the king, and his elevation kept pace with the falling fortunes of Wolsey. The decisions of those to whom the cause of the king was referred were in favour of a divorce: but the pope refused a ratification of their sentence; and Henry, disgusted with his conduct, prohibited any person within his dominions from publishing a bull contrary to his own authority. The decision of the divines was confirmed by the parliament, and the convocation; and every thing foreboded a rupture with Rome.

A protracted courtship had not abated the affections of the king, and he married Ann Bullen. He was again cited to appear at Rome, but his agents protested against the jurisdiction of the pope. In 1533, the parliament again met, and an act passed by which it was determined that no appeal should be made to the court of Rome, nor any respect paid to its censures. The convocation proceeded concerning the king's union with Catharine, which was declared unlawful; and Cranmer, who had, though contrary to his wish, been appointed archbishop of Canterbury, pronounced a divorce which annulled the marriage of Henry with his former queen. Ann Bullen was immediately invested with the crown, and made a public procession through the city. The emperor was extremely incensed by these measures; and the king of France, though he had previously engaged to mediate with the pope in favour of Henry, and even to institute a patriarch in France in opposition to the see of Rome, yet appeared little disposed to involve himself in disputes with that court. The pope however, alarmed at the probability of losing England, promised Henry that upon his return to spiritual obedience he would still decide in his favour.

Henry readily acceded to the terms, and dispatched an envoy to Rome, who from the delays he encountered in his journey did not arrive there in the appointed time, and the imperial faction represented his non-appearance as contumacy on the part of Henry, who was punished by a papal decree which ratified the decision of the consistory, that the marriage between the king and Catharine was perfectly valid, and he was required to live with her as his lawful wife. This determined Henry to shake off the papal yoke. The arguments concerning the supremacy were fully discussed, and it was determined both by the parliament and convocation, that the pope possessed no power in England, and that the authority of the king extended to the regulation not only of civil but of ecclesiastical concerns. The succession to the throne was settled upon the issue of his present marriage, or, in default of that, on the king's right heirs for ever, and sworn to by nearly all the clergy, regular and secular. In the ensuing session of 1534, an act passed declaring the king *the supreme head, on earth, of the church of England*, and all heresies and abuses in the spiritual jurisdiction were referred to him and his heirs, to be openly tried. The revenues formerly exacted by the popes were assigned to the crown.

The preachers of reformation had been little molested during the ministry of Wolsey. The German reformers had dispatched to them a considerable number of books, which exposed the errors and absurdities of the Romish church, and were secretly but extensively circulated. The principal performance they received, was a translation of the Bible. On the appointment of Sir Thomas More to the chancellorship, the king was however persuaded to treat the reformers with severity, as the most infallible method to conciliate the favour of the Romish see. The laws against them were accordingly rigorously enforced, and numbers were burnt at the stake. These persecutions were however checked by an act which regulated the proceedings against heretics, and by the necessity in which the king was involved, in order to embarrass the operations of the emperor, and to prevent his directing his arms against England.

A convocation was held in 1536, in which, after several vehement disputes, Cranmer obtained permission from the king to have the Bible translated into the vulgar tongue, and within a short time the impression was completed. This brilliant dawn preceded however a tempestuous day. The versatile Henry had again changed the object of his affections, whose influence over his mind had probably occasioned the readiness with which he entered into schemes calculated to produce effects to which he was in reality adverse; and the enemies of the reformation took



advantage of the change in the king's mind, to ruin Anna Bullen, whose unhappy death considerably retarded the progress of the reformed doctrines.

The translation of the Bible was completed in 1537, and Cromwell had the address to obtain an order from the king that it should be permitted to be read by all his subjects. There was however no abatement of zeal against the heretics in the mind of Henry, and his hatred towards them was increased by the exhortations of the bigotted Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, who represented that severity against them was not only in itself proper and salutary, but extremely well adapted to conciliate the good opinion of the people. The influence of Cranmer with the king had for some time been declining; but Cromwell, who still preserved his place in the confidence of Henry, and who was equally solicitous in the cause of reformation, determined to engage the monarch in such an alliance with the princes of Germany, as should secure the promotion of their views.

In 1539, the total dissolution of the monasteries was effected; but Cromwell's activity in their suppression, and his ardour for the doctrines of reformation, had rendered him extremely unpopular; and his elevation from the station of an obscure individual to the enjoyment of the highest honours of the state made him extremely obnoxious to the nobility. The attachment of the king to Catherine Howard afforded the duke of Norfolk, her uncle, an opportunity of effecting the ruin of a man whose birth he despised, whose sentiments he abhorred, and whose elevation he envied. The clergy had suffered too much from the exposure and censures of Cromwell, not to concur in any measure which might accelerate his fall. He was accordingly attainted of high treason, and lost his life on the blocks. The death of Cromwell for some time impeded the progress of the doctrines of the reformation, and the king was engaged in a renewal of severities against the reformed party.

The full use of the translation of the Bible was not yet allowed, and in the year 1543, an act passed, which prohibited the inferior orders of the people from possessing a Bible. The spirits of the reformers were revived in the ensuing year by an order from the king, for translating into English the Prayers, Processions, and Litanies, which they flattered themselves would be succeeded by a full translation of all the different Liturgies. Henry however lived not further to prosecute the work of reformation, or any other work; but died on the 27th of January, in the year 1547. He left all parties dissatisfied with his conduct. His system of reformation was not calculated to satisfy the minds of either. He had proceeded too far not to offend the one, but stopped very short of what would have gratified the

other; and to both he was equally the object of distrust and of fear.

The first step respecting the reformation which was publicly taken after the accession of Edward VI. his son and successor, was in consequence of the marked disapprobation which was frequently shown to images. Several were forcibly taken down from the churches; and Seymoure, duke of Somerset, who had been invested with the title of protector during the minority of the king, justified the measures, but prudently censured the violent and disorderly mode in which it had been performed. The deceased monarch, by the suppression of the monasteries, had without reluctance deprived the dead of the benefit of the masses which had already been paid for, and which were supposed to effect their deliverance from purgatorial pains; but this was during the enjoyment of health, and in the prospect of an extended life. That superstition which has been early implanted in the mind is, however, apt to recur whenever the mind from any cause becomes weakened; and Henry conferred a rich endowment upon the church of Windsor for the reciting of masses upon his account. The splendid donation was not, however, without effects, of the benefit of which the reformers largely partook; it introduced an inquiry into the utility of soul-masses and obits, which was extremely favourable to the cause of reformation.

In the first parliament of Edward, an act passed for receiving the communion in both kinds; and the convocation, which sat at the same time, determined in favour of the legality of marriages contracted by any of the sacerdotal order. In the year 1548, an order was issued for the suppression of several ceremonies, and to this an injunction ensued for the removal of all images from the churches; and all shrines, together with the plate, were appropriated to the use of the king.

In the year 1549 an act passed, legalizing the marriages of the clergy, and another confirming the liturgy. Cranmer having obtained these concessions, endeavoured still further to extend the reformed opinions respecting the nature of the Lord's supper. In 1550, a new form of ordination was prepared, and confirmed under the great seal; the prayers to the saints were erased from the ancient rituals, and the clergy ceased to oppose the progress of alteration. From the different changes which had arisen in ecclesiastical promotions, the bishops were in general extremely well affected to the reformation; and it was therefore agreed to proceed to a settlement of the articles of religion. The brilliancy of the prospect they had now attained was, however, soon obscured, and the premature death of the virtuous young king which impeded the establishment of reformation.



Mary the daughter of Henry VIII. and of Catharine of Arragon, ascended the throne with a fixed determination to introduce popery, and would precipitately have abolished every vestige of the reformation, had not the persuasions and advice of her counsellors, and principally of Gardiner whom she had promoted to the office of chancellor, induced her to effect her measures by gradual means. Bonner, whose violence had occasioned his expulsion from the bishopric of London during the former reign, was soon re-instated in his see; but some oblique reflections against the memory of the deceased monarch, thrown out in a sermon by Bourne one of the bishop's chaplains, occasioned a violent ferment amongst the populace. This tumult afforded a pretext for new measures, and a prohibition was issued to prevent the preaching of any, but such as could obtain a license from the bigotted chancellor. Images and the ancient rites began soon to re-appear; the Roman catholics were encouraged and promoted, and the reformers as much as possible excluded from all offices of power and trust. These measures were too unjust and violent, not to excite the indignation of Cranmer, who, with the benevolent and virtuous Latimer bishop of Worcester, and several others, was imprisoned in the Tower. A parliament was speedily summoned, from which many of the friends of reformation were either artfully or violently excluded, and an act passed for repealing all the laws relative to religion enacted during the former reign. Cranmer was degraded from the see of Canterbury, and attained of high treason.

These events, so distressing to the reformers, were succeeded by the intelligence which soon began to transpire of the treaty between Mary and the pope. On her accession to the throne, a messenger had been secretly dispatched to her from his holiness, to persuade her to a reconciliation with the apostolic see. Mary was perfectly disposed to the measure, and assured him of her firm intention to return to the obedience required; but was too sensible of the obstruction which might arise to her affairs by the premature declaration of such an intention, not to oblige the messenger to secrecy. The submission of the queen was gratefully received by the court of Rome. A public rejoicing of three days succeeded the intelligence, during which the pope officiated at the mass in person, and made a liberal distribution of indulgences to the people. Cardinal Pole was appointed in the quality of legate to negotiate the affair in England; but his journey was deferred at the express desire of the queen, who found that the restoration of the papal power, and the union with the prince of Spain which was then negotiating, were steps too adventurous to be undertaken at the same time.

The marriage of Mary with the prince of Spain, was a measure so extremely unpopular that insurrections took place in several parts of the kingdom. They were, however, soon quelled; but produced the general effects of an ill-concerted opposition to a weak government; the friends of the queen were elated, and her enemies depressed. Nor was this the only advantage they produced: a pretext was by this means afforded for the removal of suspected or disaffected persons, and the reformed party were charged, though without any sufficient proof, of being the authors of the revolt. Injunctions were issued to the bishops to enforce the ecclesiastical laws which existed during the reign of Henry VIII. They were further required to suppress all heresy and heretics, and to dismiss all married clergymen from their appointments. This was succeeded by an order for the expulsion of seven of the reformed bishops, under the pretext either of their marriage, or their opposition to the *universal church*. Several others of the bishops fled; the remainder had too ardent aspirations for preferment, to oppose the views of the court; and the introduction of sixteen new bishops, to replace those who had voluntarily or forcibly been expelled from their sees, composed a bench little disposed to counteract the designs of the queen.

A cruel persecution soon after took place, and several eminent persons were condemned to the stake. These cruel executions had their customary effects; they united the interests of the persecuted party, and excited the censures of the moderate. Gardiner, alarmed for the consequences, resigned the management of these affairs to the fierce and sanguinary Bonner. Every circumstance of aggravated cruelty was inflicted upon the unhappy victims, and humanity recoils from the relation of their sufferings. The zealous queen restored to the clergy all the lands of which they had been deprived by her predecessors, and animated Bonner in his efforts for the extirpation of heresy. The bigotry and austerity of Mary had been increased by her adoption of Spanish counsels, and her natural peevishness was increased by her losing all hopes of producing a successor to the crown, and by the desertion of her husband, the unworthy Philip. The only alleviation, of which her melancholy appeared susceptible, arose from the destruction of the reformed party, and the restoration of several of the religious houses. Sixty-seven of the reformers suffered in the year 1555, at the stake, amongst whom was the virtuous Ridley, and the aged Latimer, whose primitive simplicity of character was a tacit reproach upon the luxury and false refinements of the Romish clergy.

The ruin of the chief of the reformed party in England had



been previously resolved, yet the life of the illustrious Cranmer was spared till the year 1556. The utmost ingenuity of malice was employed to ridicule and increase the sufferings under which he laboured; and the credit in which he stood with the reformed party both at home and abroad made his opponents extremely desirous to procure a change in his opinions. For this purpose every effort was employed to produce a recantation of his sentiments; and, unfortunately for the peace of that short portion of life which remained to him, Cranmer, in a fit of weakness or of terror, signed his abjuration of the new opinions. The inhuman queen had, however, determined upon his destruction, but the knowledge of her intentions was concealed from the destined victim. Cranmer, however, immediately repented, with great anguish of mind, of the compliance into which he had been betrayed, and composed a confession of faith according to the real dictates of his conscience. He was condemned to the stake; and when taken from his prison to the church previous to his execution, he discovered the utmost agitation, and expressed extreme remorse for having in a weak and unguarded moment been tempted to relinquish those principles for which he was willing to sacrifice his life. He was desirous to proceed in his exhortations to the people; but he was hurried to the stake, where he endured his severe sufferings with unshaken constancy, and appeared particularly desirous to expiate his fault by voluntarily exposing his right hand to the flames till it dropped off, repeatedly exclaiming, ‘This unworthy hand!’

Thus perished the distinguished leader of the English reformation, whose virtues and talents would have conferred dignity on a less important cause. His death was the prelude to several others. Seventy-nine unhappy sufferers expiated the crime of heresy at the stake in 1557, and several more in the following year; great numbers died in prison; and the collective number of those who perished for the faith during these unhappy transactions amounted to above six hundred persons, of whom five were bishops, and twenty-one ministers. The graves were even summoned to surrender the guilty dead. Martin Bucer, and Fagius, two German divines who had been invited into England by Edward VI. were cited to appear and give an account of their faith; but as they had been interred some years before, they did not appear, and this *contumacy* was punished by their bodies being taken up, hanged, and then consumed to ashes.

The death of Mary in 1558, was received with despondence by the papal party, and with equal joy by the friends of reformation. The opinions of Elizabeth, her successor, respecting religion were well known: her legitimacy, and consequently her claim to the throne, depended upon the invalidity of her

father's marriage with Catharine of Arragon; she was therefore both from political and religious motives an enemy to the papal power, and attached to the reformation. One of the first measures taken by Elizabeth was to notify her accession to the foreign courts, and amongst others to that of Rome. The pope, however, received her ambassadors with great haughtiness, and refused to acknowledge her title to the throne upon any other terms than a submission to the apostolic see. To that authority the queen was on every account determined not to submit, and it was resolved by her council that she should take the advice of parliament concerning the measures which might be most efficacious for opposing his influence against her in foreign courts.

Every measure pursued by the new queen predicted the destruction of the papal party. Public disputations on the controverted points were once more commanded, and probably were terminated in their usual way, leaving each party rather confirmed than altered in their original opinion. The book of Common Prayer, was again revised, and introduced into the churches; and the abbey lands, restored by Mary, were again resumed by the crown. The oath respecting the queen's supremacy was, however, rejected by many of the bishops: but the greater part of them remained quietly in England after the deprivation of their sees; and the character of Elizabeth derives one of its brightest rays from the policy or the clemency with which she permitted the unmolested departure of all who desired leave to retire into other countries, and the moderation with which all abuses were suppressed, and all alterations introduced. The Bible underwent another translation, which was completed in three years: and the doctrines of the reformation were declared those of the English church. The reformed party in Scotland, France, and the Netherlands, were powerfully assisted by Elizabeth, who was left at sufficient leisure to attend to their concerns by the submission with which the English catholics received all the innovations she introduced. Her lenity, though in fact only the dictate of justice, yet, contrasted with the violence of her predecessor, demanded their gratitude. The monks who had been dispossessed of their monasteries had been assigned pensions, which were to be paid by the possessors of the forfeited lands. These payments were, however, neglected; and this unhappy fraternity, who had been educated in solitude and ignorance, were starving in old age, disregarded by the protestants, and too numerous to find relief from those of their own persuasion. In this exigency their wants were relieved by Elizabeth; she commanded that their pensions should be paid with punctuality and justice, and satisfaction be made for all arrears unjustly detained.



The dependence of so considerable a country as England upon the see of Rome was a circumstance too flattering to the vanity, and too gratifying to the avarice of that court, to be easily relinquished. Pius IV. therefore no sooner ascended the papal chair, than, condemning the arrogance of his predecessor, he made several overtures for a reconciliation with Elizabeth, and proposed to concede to the English the ritual they approved, and the use of the communion in both kinds, on condition that the queen should acknowledge her subjection to the Roman see. This she refused. His successor Pius V. was much less moderate, and is accused of having instigated several attempts against the life of Elizabeth. These, and the designs of the king of Spain to invade her dominions, together with the endeavours made use of by the Catholic priests to seduce her subjects from their allegiance, form some excuse for the departure of the queen from those sentiments of moderation which had distinguished and illumined the commencement of her reign. It is with regret that posterity will view this change from mildness to severity towards her opponents in religion. Though induced to it by strong provocations, her course in several instances can never be justified.

The opinions which had been propagated by Luther in Germany, were soon extended to Scotland, which in common with the other nations in Europe had long groaned under the papal yoke. The reformation doctrines were received by considerable numbers in that country during the reign of James V. and political causes contributed to their extension. This monarch wished to humble the nobility, and for this purpose sought the support of the clergy; and the nobles, who envied the power of the sacerdotal order, were, in opposition to the crown, additionally disposed to give their weight to the people. The new opinions were therefore favourably received by many persons of superior rank, by some of whom they had been imbibed in Germany, and were persecuted by James and the clergy with implacable fury. Patrick Hamilton, the young and virtuous abbot of Ferne, was executed at the stake for his attachment to the reformed doctrines. They were recommended, however, by Seton the king's confessor, who saved his life by a precipitate flight. A benedictine friar of the name of Forest was in the year 1533, detected in the crime of defending the opinions of Hamilton, and the belief of his heresy was confirmed by an English Bible which was found in his possession; and for these misdemeanours he was after a public trial, condemned to the flames. His death was succeeded by that of several others for a similar offence.

Amongst the most active opposers of reformation in Scotland

was the crafty and profligate cardinal Beaton, archbishop of St. Andrews. Perceiving that confiscation and imprisonment had little effect in suppressing the reformed doctrine, the cardinal in conjunction with the other clergy, persuaded James to institute an inquisitorial court; and the sanguinary Hamilton, brother to the earl of Arron, was appointed President, with the power of summoning to his tribunal all who were suspected of heresy. The powers of this detestable engine of tyranny were however almost immediately suspended by an accusation of high treason being preferred against the President; and after his execution the project died away. Soon after this, James ended his days, and the earl of Arron was appointed regent.

Beaton, who under the title of Lord Chancellor swayed the councils of the Scotch, openly opposed an alliance with England, and favoured all the views of the queen dowager, who in her turn implicitly submitted to the directions of her brothers, the cardinal of Lorraine and the duke of Guise. This political confederacy had an immediate tendency to check the progress of reformation. The preachers whom the regent had invited to impugn the doctrines of the church were discharged; several zealous adherents to the reformation were driven into England, and an act passed for rigorous proceedings against the heretics. The cardinal, who had obtained from the pope the dignity of legate *a latere*, made a visitation in great form through the diocese. This was the signal of persecution. Great numbers suffered, among whom was the learned, the candid, the virtuous George Wishart, who after a precipitate trial was adjudged to the flames. The cardinal and the court beheld with triumph the cruel death of the unhappy sufferers. The clergy poured in their congratulations, but the people disgusted with the immoderate power which had been assumed, were soon induced to join in a conspiracy against the haughty and exulting cardinal. With Norman Lesly, the eldest son of the earl of Rothes, at their head, they entered the castle of St. Andrew's and murdered him. The conspirators immediately dispatched messengers to solicit the assistance of Henry VIII. who hastened to collect troops; while the regent applied for succours to the French. During these transactions, the regent attacked the castle of St. Andrew's which had been fortified by the conspirators; his attempt was however, without success; the besieged received by sea, assistance from England, and the favourers of the reformation daily increased. The celebrated John Knox entered the castle, and with other preachers, under the protection of the conspirators, preached the reformed doctrines with a freedom of language before unknown.

A navy dispatched from France enabled the regent to van-



quish the conspirators, who were carried into France, and used with cruelty in defiance of a particular treaty; some were confined in prison, and others, among whom was John Knox, sent to the galleys. During the succeeding contests in Scotland between the English, the French, and the Scotch, a relaxation of ecclesiastical discipline prevailed, which was favourable to the cause of reformation. No sooner however was a peace<sup>d</sup> declared, than the regent, now left at leisure to attend to the affairs of the church, punished Adam Wallace for heresy; and an act passed for forfeiting to the crown the moveable goods of all excommunicated persons. The severity of the regent towards the reformers was sensibly felt in a circuit which he made through the kingdom in company with the queen dowager.

He had fully entered into the projects of the house of Guise for promoting an union between the young queen and the dauphin, and his acquiescences had been procured, or rewarded by the title of duke of Chatelherault. His conduct had, however, rendered him obnoxious to every party, and every rank, who beheld with pleasure the surrender of his power into the hands of the queen dowager, who was invested with the regency in the year 1553. Five years afterwards the young queen was married to the dauphin.

The reformed party received considerable accession at this period from the English fugitives, who alarmed at the accession of Mary to the English throne, took refuge in Scotland. Knox, who had returned from France, made a circuit through Scotland, preaching in energetic terms the doctrines of the reformation. He was entertained in his progress by several of the nobility and gentry, who partook with him in the ordinances of religion after the reformed method. Religious assemblies were held in defiance of the church, and celebrated preachers were solicited to officiate in particular districts and towns. Knox was cited to appear before the clergy at Edinburgh, and went there accompanied by a number of gentlemen who were interestd in his cause. They however did not proceed in his prosecution, and the zealous reformer courageously inculcated his doctrines in the capital of the kingdom. His arguments and his energy occasioned a great accession to his cause, among whom was the lord Marshal, who, conjointly with the earl of Glencairn, persuaded Knox to address the queen regent upon the subject of the reformation, by whom however his letter was received with disdain. During these transactions he received an invitation to take charge of an English church at Geneva. The clergy after his departure cited him to appear before them, and after condemning him as a heretic, ordered him to be burnt in effigy.

The measures pursued against Knox prevented not the exer-

tions of other preachers. Councils and conventions of the protestants were regularly held, the ardour of the populace was inflamed, and the priests were treated with indecent ridicule. Images, crucifixes, and relics, were stolen from their churches; and the efforts of the bishops and queen were insufficient to prevent the repetition of the meetings and measures of the reformed party. They were supported by several nobleman, and by degrees they assumed a less irregular form, and added policy and address to their zeal and arguments. Animated by the letters of Knox, they formally subscribed an agreement entitled *The First Covenant*, in which they solemnly rejected the superstitions and idolatry of the Romish church, and devoted their lives and fortunes to the success of their cause.

Hamilton, archbishop of St. Andrew's whose inclinations were naturally pacific, was incited by the failure of his endeavours to effect the downfall of the new opinions by gentleness, to recur to violence. The venerable Walter Mill, was the first victim of this persecution; and the people, exasperated to fury by the execution of this martyr to the faith, entered into public subscriptions for mutual defence, and their vehemence was encouraged by the leaders of the protestant party. Reformation was loudly demanded on every hand, and the chiefs of the party presented a supplication to the queen dowager, in which they stated their grievances, enlarged upon their moderation, and besought the restoration of Christianity to its original purity. The queen dowager was embarrassed with these demands which in the present factious state of the kingdom, it was equally dangerous to oppose or encourage. She therefore adopted an indecisive conduct and while she allowed the protestants the use of prayers and religious exercises in the vulgar tongue, requested that they would hold no public assemblies in Edinburgh or Leith.

At length the artifices of the queen regent towards the reformation were fully manifested. Every honor was conferred upon the popish party, and every indignity offered to the members of the congregation. The queen regent fully threw off the mask of moderation, but she was soon mortified by the information that the reformation was established at Perth. In vain she enjoined the suppression of these novelties, or the apprehension of one of the preachers with whom she was particularly offended; and in vain did she issue her command for the ancient observation of Easter. Citations were issued to the preachers to appear at Stirling: they advanced, attended by their protestant friends; and the queen, struck with their unanimity, and dreading their power, entreated that their march might be stopped, and promised to drop the proceedings against them. Allured by this



promise, the preachers failed to appear at Stirlingon the day of citation, and were declared rebels, and all persons were prohibited from affording them comfort and assistance. This violation of faith produced distrust and terror of the civil power in every rank, and the reformers were urged to the most desperate extremities.

In this situation of affairs, Knox arrived in Scotland: he ascended the pulpit at Perth, forcibly and eloquently exposed the errors of the church; and the populace, animated by his discourses, eagerly proceeded to destroy all the objects of idolatrous worship. After repeated negociations a treaty was signed between the contending parties, in which, among other articles, it was agreed on the part of the queen, that no persecutions on the reformed party should be undertaken, and that reformation should be finally established in the approaching assembly of the three estates. The protestant party strengthened their mutual attachment by engaging, before their separation, in a new association, which was termed the *Second Covenant*.

The troops of the congregation were scarcely dispersed, before the queen regent violated the articles of the treaty, and seized the town of Perth. The earl of Argyle and Lord James Stuart, who had negociated the treaty under the authority of the queen, withdrew their allegiance and joined the protestant party. The minds of the people were inflamed still further by the exhortations of the preachers, and particularly of Knox. Wherever he addressed the populace, they were animated with extreme fury, the monuments of idolatry were demolished, and the preacher, boldly obtaining the possession of the pulpit of St. Andrew's, exhorted his disciples to action against the enemies of the church of Christ; the churches were instantly divested of their grandeur, and the monasteries levelled with the ground.

Each party immediately prepared for action: but intimidated by the formidable appearance of the congregation troops and the apprehension of a mutiny amongst the soldiers, the queen instructed the duke of Chatellherault, who led the Scottish soldiers, to treat for peace. The congregation, allured by the promises of the queen, again agreed to a truce, and were again deluded. They retook Perth, burned the abbey and palace of Scone, and ravaged Stirling.

The congregation next proceeded to Edinburgh, whence the regent precipitately retreated to Dunbar. After repeated negociations she returned; the congregation then retreated in their turn, and a treaty was concluded, in which it was stipulated, that her palace and the instruments of coinage should be restored, and that the protestants should abstain from violence, and

the regent agreed to suffer the free profession of the reformed religion among all her subjects, and that no Scotch or French mercenaries should be stationed in the town. Still however, doubtful of the faith of the regent, they entered into a still closer agreement, which they denominated the *Third Covenant*. Their union was indeed a measure of much importance; the most pertinacious obstinacy was shown by the regent for the cause of the Romish church; and the appearance of a considerable body of French troops, which had been sent by Francis and Mary, who had ascended the French throne, to her assistance, excited a general alarm. The duke of Chatelherault and the earl of Arron, his son joined the congregation. Mutual manifestoes were circulated, and the congregation again marched to Edinburgh: the regent returned to the protection of the French troops stationed at Leith, which she had fortified, and the nobles of the reformed party expostulated with her upon this fortification, and her unconstitutional introduction of foreign troops. The queen refused to destroy the fortification, or to disband the troops, and commanded the Lords to leave Edinburgh. This insult towards the natural counsellors and legislators of the realm produced an edict from the nobility, barons, and burgesses, which removed the regent from the administration of the government.

The confederated nobles now attempted to enter Leith, but were repulsed; and their affairs, from the intrigues of the queen dowager, and the want of money, fell into much perplexity. They besought aid from England, but the sum required fell into the hands of the queen's party. They were harrassed by the French troops, many silently withdrew, others fled with precipitation, and the associated nobles in a panic abandoned the capital and fled to Stirling. They were animated to hope by the exhortations of Knox, and it was determined to solicit the aid of Elizabeth of England, who, exasperated on many occasions against the court of France, promised her assistance.

Upon the dispersion of the confederated lords, the queen dowager took possession of Edinburgh, and restored there the service of the church of Rome. She solicited fresh assistance from the court of France, and determined to destroy the congregation before the arrival of the English succours. Her first attempts were successful, but the progress of her troops was impeded by the intrepidity and sagacity of lord James Stuart, though with a very inferior army. He was at length compelled to retire; the French army proceeded to St. Andrew's, but in the moment of elation were surprised with the arrival of the English troops. The French precipitately retired to Leith. The queen dowager was still more bitterly disappointed by the



failure of her expectations from France; her party dwindled, and those of the Scottish nobles who affected neutrality meditated an union with the Protestants. The Scots was called upon to assemble in arms, and expel the French. The English troops joined the congregation. The queen dowager in this extremity retired to Edinburgh castle, accompanied by a few domestics. There she received a letter from the congregation expressive of their respect, justifying their measures, and requiring the queen once more to dismiss the mercenary troops with their officers and captains. The queen evaded a direct answer. The congregation proceeded to Leith, and several fell on both sides without a decisive victory. The grand object for which the congregation contended was brought more fully into the public view by the *Fourth Covenant*, which was entered into by the whole party with peculiar solemnity. They agreed to expel from the realm all foreigners as oppressors of public liberty, and professed their desire to live under due obedience to their king and queen, and be ruled by the laws of their country, and by officers born and educated among them. The queen dowager received the intelligence of this association with extreme sorrow which was augmented by the continual distresses which attended her troops at Leith; and, wasted by grief and disease, she expired in the castle of Edinburgh.

The situation of France required an exemption from foreign wars, but Francis and Mary conceived it derogatory to their dignity to treat with the congregation, and applied to Elizabeth to effect a reconcilliation with the confederated lords. The commissioners to Elizabeth were empowered, conjointly with the commissioners of that queen, to hear and relieve the complaints of the congregation. The congregation, on their part, appointed commissioners to state their grievances and specify their demands. The English and French plenipotentiaries drew up a deed, in which several points relating to civil liberty were gained to the people, and it was determined to establish a full act of oblivion. The subject of the reformation was referred to the ensuing meeting of parliament. Peace was proclaimed, and preachers appointed to teach regularly in the principal towns of the kingdom.

Upon the meeting of parliament, the protestants presented their confession of faith, which was publicly read, and the Romish divines were commanded to state their objections. None were made, and the parliament examined and ratified the confession which had been presented. An act against the mass soon ensued; the authority of the pope was annulled; and nothing remained to the protestant party but to obtain the ratification of these transactions from Francis and Mary. This was how-

ever refused, but the parliament protected its own acts, and popery was completely destroyed in Scotland. The death of Francis removed the most formidable enemy to their measures, and the Scottish church soon assumed a regular and permanent form.

The cause of the reformation underwent in Ireland the same vicissitudes and revolutions, which had attended it in England. When Henry VIII. after the abolition of the papal authority, was declared supreme head, upon earth, of the church of England, George Brown, a native of England, and a monk of the Augustin order, whom that monarch had created, in the year 1535, archbishop of Dublin, began to act with the utmost vigour in consequence of this change in the hierarchy. He purged the churches of his diocese from superstition in all its various forms, pulled down images, destroyed relics, abolished absurd and idolatrous rites, and, by the influence as well as authority which he possessed in Ireland, caused the king's supremacy to be acknowledged in that nation. Henry demonstrated soon after, that this supremacy was not a vain title; for he banished the monks out of that kingdom, confiscated their revenues, and destroyed their convents. In the reign of Edward VI. still further progress was made in the removal of popish superstitions, by the zealous labours of archbishop Brown, and the auspicious encouragement he granted to all who exerted themselves in the cause of the reformation. But the death of this excellent prince, and the accession of his sister to the throne, changed the face of things in Ireland, as it had already done in England. The reign of Elizabeth, however, gave a new and deadly blow to popery, which was again recovering its force, and arming itself once more with the authority of the throne; and the Irish were obliged again to submit to the form of worship and discipline established in England.

The reformation had not long been established in Britain, when the Belgic provinces, united by a respectable confederacy, which still subsists, withdrew from their spiritual allegiance to the pope. Phillip II. king of Spain apprehending the danger to which the religion of Rome was exposed from that spirit of liberty and independence which prevailed among the inhabitants of the Low Countries, adopted the most violent measures to dispel it. For this purpose he augmented the number of the bishops, enacted the most severe laws against all innovations in matters of religion, and erected that unjust and inhuman tribunal of the inquisition. But his measures, in this respect, were as unsuccessful as they were absurd; his furious and intemperate zeal for the superstitions of Rome accelerated their destruction, and the papal authority, which had only been in a critical state,



was reduced to desperation, by the very steps which were designed to support it. The nobility formed themselves into an association, in the year 1566, with a view to procure the repeal of these tyrannical and barbarous edicts; but their solicitations and requests being treated with contempt, they resolved to obtain by force what they hoped to have gained from clemency and justice. They addressed themselves to a free and an oppressed people, spurned his abused authority, and, with an impetuosity and vehemence which were perhaps excessive, trampled upon whatever was held sacred or respectable by the church of Rome. To quell these tumults, a powerful army was sent from Spain, under the command of the duke of Alva, whose unprecedent and sanguinary proceedings kindled that long and bloody war from which the powerful republic of the United Provinces derived its origin, consistence, and grandeur. It was the heroic conduct of William of Nassau, prince of Orange, seconded by the assistance of England and France, which delivered this state from the Spanish yoke; and no sooner was this deliverance obtained, than the reformed religion, as it was professed in Switzerland, was established in the United Provinces; and, at the same time, an universal toleration was granted to those whose religious sentiments were of a different nature, whether they retained the faith of Rome, or embraced the reformation in another form, provided still they made no attempts against the authority of the government, or the tranquility of the public.

The reformation made a considerable progress in Italy and Spain soon after the rupture between Luther and the pope. In all the provinces of Italy, but more especially in the territories of Venice, Tuscany, and Naples, the religion of Rome lost ground, and great numbers of persons of all ranks and orders expressed an aversion to the papal dominion. Violent and dangerous commotions were consequently excited in the kingdom of Naples, in the year 1540, of which the principal authors were Bernard Ochino and Peter Martyr, who, in their public discourses from the pulpit, exhausted all the force of their eloquence in exposing the enormity of the reigning superstition. These tumults were appeased with much difficulty by the united efforts of Charles V. and his viceroy Don Pedro di Toledo. In several places the popes put a stop to the progress of the reformation, by letting loose the inquisitors upon the pretended heretics, who spread the marks of their usual cruelty through the greater part of Italy. But the horrors of the inquisition, which had terrified back into the profession of popery several protestants in other parts of Italy, could not penetrate into the kingdom of Naples, nor could either the authority or entreaties

of the pope engage the Neapolitans to admit within their territories either a court of inquisition, or even visiting inquisitors.

But the inquisition, which could not gain any footing in the kingdom of Naples, reigned triumphant in Spain; and by racks, gibbets, and stakes, and other such formidable instruments of persuasion, soon terrified the people back into popery; and that kingdom still deplores the gloomy reign of ignorance and superstition, with the total extinction of civil and religious liberty.

But it was in France that the reformed religion underwent the most cruel vicissitudes, and felt most severely the arm of civil power. The religion of Francis I. if an abandoned profligate can be said to possess any religion, was of the most bigotted species; and by his zeal for the Romish church, he perhaps flattered himself that he could in some degree compensate for the shameless immorality of his life. The flames of persecution were lighted up, during his unquiet reign, through every province of France; and though the zeal of the monarch was sometimes tempered by the gentle interference of his amiable sister, the queen of Navarre, and the exigencies of the times, still it occasionally recurred with fresh vigour, as caprice, or the dictates of his spiritual guide, the cardinal de Tournou directed; and innumerable martyrs, eminent for virtue and learning, were daily exposed to tortures and to death.

In the mountains of Languedoc and Provence there still existed some remains of the Vandois, or Waldenses, the miserable remnants of the memorable crusade which had been too successfully excited against them. These simple and virtuous people had in 1532, formed a kind of union with the reformed churches in Switzerland; but in 1545, they were selected as the victims of superstitious fury. Whole villages, particularly Merindol and Cabrieres, were exterminated by the catholics; and so dreadful was the slaughter, that it is even said to have afflicted Francis on his death bed with the most poignant remorse.

The successor of Francis, Henry II. while motives of policy induced him to take arms in defence of the protestants of Germany, still pursued in his own dominions the persecuting system of his father. Notwithstanding this, the progress of the protestant doctrines was rapid. Several bishops of the Gallican church were strongly disposed in their favour; and they were openly embraced by Anthony of Bourbon, king of Navarre, Lewis, prince of Conde, his brother, admiral Coligny, the duke de Rohan, and some others of the nobility.

During the feeble minority of the son of Henry, Francis II. the nation fell under the arbitrary government of two inflexible bigots, the dukes of Guise, uncles to the unfortunate Mary, queen of Scots, who was wife to Francis II. Their conduct



however proved so oppressive and obnoxious, that the famous league or conspiracy of Amboise was formed by the protestant nobles for the purpose of wresting the power out of the hands of this arrogant and intolerant family; but the plan being unfortunately discovered, the leaders barely escaped with their lives.

Charles IX. succeeded Francis; and during his reign, the jealousy of the two parties, which had hitherto been restrained within moderate bounds, broke out into a flame. The first act of violence was the massacre of sixty persons of the reformed church, at Vassy in Champagne, during the time of divine service, by the duke of Guise and his army. A violent civil war ensued, in the course of which the duke of Guise lost his life by the hands of an assassin, and dying, advised the queen mother to agree to the peace which soon followed, and granted to the reformed the free exercise of their religion. An ill compacted peace served but to smother for a season the zeal of the contending parties. A series of wars and persecutions succeeded, which would be tedious to detail. They were concluded at length by the fallacious treaty of 1570, which served only to cover the diabolical project, which Charles and the catholic party had formed for the extermination of the new opinions.

A marriage being concluded, in 1572, between the young king of Navarre (afterwards the famous Henry IV.) and Margaret, the sister of Charles IX. the Hugonots\* were invited from all parts of the kingdom to the celebration of the nuptials. On the bloody festival of St. Bartholomew, a signal was given to a party of desperate assassins, headed by the house of Guise, and they furiously attacked the houses of the Hugonots in every quarter of the city. The first victim was the admiral Coligny. The king of Navarre and the prince of Conde escaped with difficulty by a pretended abjuration of their religion. The same tragedy was acted, by secret orders from the king, in all the principal cities of France, and upwards of 30,000 martyrs were sacrificed to superstition and intolerance.

The Hugonots, though disheartened, were not destroyed by this unhappy transaction. They recovered their strength and their vigour before the succeeding campaign, and carried on the war with such spirit, that they forced the bigotted monarch to grant them terms still more favourable than they had obtained by any former treaty. On the death of Charles IX. his brother Henry III. succeeded, and the necessity of his affairs obliged him to grant terms very favourable to the Hugonots. At the

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\*The reformed, or French protestants, began to be distinguished by this appellation about 1561. The term is derived, according to some, from a gate in Tours called *Hugon*, where it is said they first assembled; and according to others, from the first words of their original protest, or confession of faith.—*Hue nos venimus*, &c.

instigation of the pope, the catholics now formed in contempt of the royal authority, the celebrated association called the *League* the professed object of which was the extirpation of heresy. This combination however, had a further aim, and was in reality founded on the ambition of the house of Guise to raise itself to the throne of France. So dangerous a combination therefore demanded some exertion on the part of the king: and it is only to be lamented, that he did not oppose it by more justifiable measures. He caused the two heads of the league, Henry duke of Guise, and the cardinal his brother, to be assassinated at the states of Blois; and soon after, in 1589, he himself experienced the same fate; as he was approaching to lay siege to Paris, which was retained by the catholic party, he was stabbed in his tent by an emissary of the leaguers.

The family of Valois ceased in Henry III. and the right of succession centered in Henry of Bourbon, king of Navarre, who assumed the title of Henry IV. The obstinacy of the catholic party, who still maintained the league, withheld this great statesman and able commander for upward of four years from the possession of his hereditary dignities. Henry at length, however, made a final sacrifice of conscience to ambition. He publicly abjured the reformed religion in 1593, and by that step gained possession of the throne. By the famous edict of Nantz, which was termed a *perpetual* and *inviolable* edict, he however secured to his old friends, the Hugonots, the undisturbed exercise of their religion, and perfect liberty of conscience. And thus ended these religious disturbances, which had divided the kingdom of France for a considerable part of the sixteenth century.

Though the great body of protestants proceeded with unanimity in the principal object of abolishing the superstition and tyranny of the church of Rome, there did not exist among them that perfect harmony and consistence with respect to doctrinal points, which might be expected from persons actuated by the love of truth, and professing to derive their information from the same source. Between the fathers of the reformation, Luther and Zuinglius, there existed almost from the first a considerable difference of sentiment, concerning the nature of the holy sacrament. Luther rejected the popish doctrine of transubstantiation, but unfortunately, not able to free himself at once from all the fetters of prejudice, instead of wholly discarding the absurdity, he attempted to new-model it. Though he rejected the opinion of the entire change of the elements by consecration, he held nevertheless that the body and blood of Christ are still *materially* present in the consecrated elements; and this union of the body and blood of Christ with the bread and wine, is by the Lutheran church expressed by the interme-



diate term consubstantiation. Carløstadius, who was originally the coadjutor of Luther in the university of Wittemberg, and Zuinglius, the celebrated Swiss reformer, began their mission under more favourable circumstances than Luther, and they adopted a system, which in their opinion was more consistent both with scripture and reason. They considered the consecrated elements merely as figures or symbols of the absent body of Christ, and regarded the rite itself as intended chiefly to preserve in our minds a pious remembrance of the sufferings of Christ, and a sense of our obligations to fulfil the gospel covenant. A real, though spiritual presence was acknowledged by Calvin, and his doctrine, on this point, seems at length to have prevailed in several of the reformed churches.

Other disputes arose between the followers of Luther and Calvin, concerning the nature of the divine decrees respecting man's salvation. The latter, is well known, maintain with the utmost rigour the doctrines of election and predestination.

In the dark catalogue of heresies recorded by historians of the Romish communion, the opinions of Luther, Calvin and Zuinglius maintain a distinguished situation. Connected as they were with political events, they have already been sufficiently discussed. During the ardour of speculation which these religious contests occasioned, it would have been extraordinary, if considering the different interests, views, prejudices, and passions, by which mankind are usually actuated, a perfect uniformity in point of doctrine and discipline, had prevailed all who were desirous of being emancipated from the yoke of Rome. In the course of this century the Scriptures were translated into almost all the different languages of Europe. They would necessarily be read by men of different tempers, and of different attainments; and consequently (without even calling in the aid of that principle which impels mankind to render themselves eminent or distinguished) there are many motives which might create a difference of sentiment in the most impartial inquirers. Religious opinions, however distant from our own are always objects of respect and veneration. It is not therefore with a design of casting a reflection upon the authors or professors of these opinions, but for the sake of order and perspicuity, that a distinction is observed in this history between those doctrines which became the established religion of different countries, and those which are professed only by small or subordinate societies.

It was observed that, in a very early period of the reformation, certain of the disciples of Luther, and particularly one of the name of Muncer, adopted opinions in some instances apparently replete with enthusiasm, and on some occasions proceeded

to the disturbance of the public tranquillity. From these reformers proceeded the sect of the Anabaptists. They first made their appearance in the provinces of Upper Germany, where the severity of the magistrates kept them under controul. But in the Netherlands and Westphalia, they obtained admittance into several towns, and spread their principles. The most remarkable of their religious tenets related to the sacrament of baptism, which, as they contended, ought to be administered only to persons grown up to years of understanding, and should be performed not by sprinkling them with water, but by dipping them in it: for this reason they condemned the baptism of infants; and re-baptizing all whom they admitted into their society, the sect came to be distinguished by the name of Anabaptists. To this peculiar notion concerning baptism, they added other principles of a most enthusiastic as well as dangerous nature. They maintained that, among Christians who had the precepts of the gospel to direct, and the spirit of God to guide them, the office of the magistracy was not only unnecessary, but an unlawful encroachment on their spiritual liberty; that the distinctions occasioned by birth, or rank, or wealth, being contrary to the spirit of the gospel which considers all men as equal, should be entirely abolished; that all Christians, throwing their possessions into one common stock, should live together in that state of equality which becomes members of the same family; that as neither the laws of nature, nor the precepts of the New-Testament, had imposed any restraints upon men with regard to the number of wives which they might marry, they should use that liberty which God himself had granted to the patriarchs.

Such opinions, propagated and maintained with enthusiastic zeal and boldness, were not long without producing the violent effects natural to them. Two Anabaptist prophets, John Matthias, a baker of Haerlem, and John Boccold, or Beukels, a journeyman taylor of Lyden, possessed with the rage of making proselytes, fixed their residence at Munster, an imperial city of Westphalia, of the first rank, under the sovereignty of its bishop, but governed by its own senate and consuls. As neither of these fanatics wanted the talents requisite in desperate enterprises, great resolution, the appearance of sanctity, bold pretensions to inspiration, and a confident and plausible manner of discoursing, they soon gained many converts. Among these were Rothman, who had first preached the protestant doctrine in Munster, and Knipperdoling, a citizen of considerable eminence. Emboldened by the countenance of such disciples, they openly taught their opinions; and not satisfied with that liberty, they made several attempts, though without success, to become masters of the town, in order to get their tenets established by



public authority. At last, having secretly called in their associates from the neighbouring country, they suddenly took possession of the arsenal and senate-house in the night, and running through the streets with drawn swords, and horrible howlings, cried out alternately, "Repent, and be baptized," and "Depart ye ungodly." The senators, the canons, the nobility, together with the more sober citizens, whether Papists or Protestants, terrified at their threats and outcries, fled in confusion, and left the city under the dominion of a frantic multitude, consisting chiefly of strangers. Nothing now remaining to overawe or controul them, they set about modelling the government according to their own wild ideas; and though at first they showed so much reverence for the ancient constitution, as to elect senators of their own sect, and to appoint Knipperdoling and another proselyte consuls, this was nothing more than form; for all their proceedings were directed by Matthias; who, in the style, and with the authority of a prophet, uttered his commands, which it was instant death to disobey. Having begun with encouraging the multitude to pillage the churches, and deface their ornaments, he enjoined them to destroy all books except the Bible, as useless or impious; he ordered the estates of such as fled to be confiscated, and sold to the inhabitants of the adjacent country; he commanded every man to bring forth his gold, silver, and other precious effects, and to lay them at his feet: the wealth amassed by these means, he deposited in a public treasury, and named deacons to dispense it for the common use of all. The members of this commonwealth being thus brought to a perfect equality, he commanded all of them to eat at tables prepared in public, and even prescribed the dishes which were to be served up each day. Having finished his plan of reformation, his next care was to provide for the defence of the city; and he took measures for that purpose with a prudence which betrayed nothing of fanaticism. He collected large magazines of every kind; he repaired and extended the fortifications, obliging every person without distinction to work in his turn; he formed such as were capable of bearing arms into regular bodies, and endeavoured to add the stability of discipline to the impetuosity of enthusiasm. He sent emissaries to the Anabaptists in the Low Countries, inviting them to assemble at Munster, which he dignified with the name of Mount-Sion, that they might set out to reduce all the nations of the earth under their dominion. He himself was unwearied in attending to every thing necessary for the security or increase of the sect; animating his disciples by his own example to decline no labour, as well as to submit to every hardship; and their enthusiastic passions being kept from subsiding by a perpetual succession of exhortations, revelations,

and prophecies, they seemed ready to undertake or to suffer any thing in maintenance of their opinions.

While they were thus employed, the bishop of Munster, having assembled a considerable army, advanced to besiege the town. On his approach, Matthias sallied out at the head of some chosen troops, attacked one quarter of his camp, forced it, and after great slaughter returned to the city loaded with glory and with spoil. Intoxicated with this success, he appeared next day brandishing a spear, and declared, that, in imitation of Gideon, he would go forth with a handful of men, and smite the host of the ungodly. Thirty persons, whom he named, followed him without hesitation in this wild enterprise, and, rushing on the enemy with a frantic courage, were cut off to a man. The death of their prophet occasioned at first great consternation among his disciples; but Boccold, by the same gifts and pretensions which had gained Matthias credit, soon revived their spirits and hopes to such a degree, that he succeeded the deceased prophet in the same absolute direction of all their affairs. As he did not possess that enterprising courage which distinguished his predecessor, he satisfied himself with carrying on a defensive war; and without attempting to annoy the enemy by sallies, he waited for the succours he expected from the Low Countries, the arrival of which was often foretold and promised by their prophets. But though less daring in action than Matthias, he was a wilder enthusiast, and of more unbounded ambition. Soon after the death of his predecessor, having, by obscure visions and prophecies, prepared the multitude for some extraordinary event, he marched through the streets and proclaimed with a loud voice, "That the kingdom of Sion was at hand; that whatever was highest on earth should be brought low, and whatever was lowest should be exalted." In order to fulfil this, he commanded the churches, as the most lofty buildings in the city, to be levelled with the ground; he degraded the senators chosen by Matthias, and depriving Knipperdoling of the consulship, the highest office of the commonwealth, appointed him to execute the lowest and most infamous, that of common hangman to which strange transition the other agreed, not only without murmuring, but with the utmost joy; and such was the despotic rigour of Boccold's administration, that he was called almost every day to perform some duty or other of his wretched function. In place of the deposed senators, he named twelve judges, according to the number of tribes in Israel, to preside in all affairs; retaining to himself the same authority, which Moses anciently possessed as legislator of that people.

Not satisfied, however, with power or titles which were not supreme, a prophet, whom he had gained and tutored, having



called the multitude together, declared it to be the will of God, that John Boccold should be king of Zion, and sit on the throne of David. John, kneeling down, accepted of the call, which he solemnly protested had been revealed likewise to himself, and was immediately acknowledged as monarch by the deluded multitude. From that moment he assumed all the state and pomp of royalty. He wore a crown of gold, and was clad in the richest and most sumptuous garments. A bible was carried in one hand and a naked sword in the other. A great body of guards accompanied him when he appeared in public. He coined money stamped with his own image, and appointed the great officers of his household and kingdom, among whom Knipperdoling was nominated governor of the city, as a reward for his former submission.

Having now attained the height of power, Boccold began to discover passions, which he had hitherto restrained, or indulged only in secret. As the excesses of enthusiasm have been observed in every age to lead to sensual gratification, the same constitution that is susceptible of the former being remarkably prone to the latter, he instructed the prophets and teachers to harangue the people for several days, concerning the lawfulness and even necessity of taking more wives than one, which they asserted to be one of the privileges granted by God to the saints. When their ears were once accustomed to this licentious doctrine, and their passions inflamed with the prospect of such unbounded indulgence, he himself set them an example of using what he called their Christian liberty, by marrying at once three wives, among whom the widow of Matthias, a woman of singular beauty, was one. As he was allured by beauty, or the love of variety, he gradually added to the number of his wives, until they amounted to fourteen, though the widow of Matthias was the only one dignified with the title of queen, or who shared with him the splendour and ornaments of royalty. After the example of their prophet, the multitude gave themselves up to the most licentious and uncontrolled gratification of their desires. No man remained satisfied with a single wife. Not to use their Christian liberty, was deemed a crime. Persons were appointed to search the houses for young women grown up to maturity, whom they instantly compelled to marry. Together with polygamy, freedom of divorce, its inseparable attendant, was introduced, and became a new source of corruption. Every excess was committed, of which the passions of men are capable, when restrained neither by the authority of laws, nor the sense of decency; and by a monstrous and almost incredible conjunction, voluptuousness was engrafted on religion, and dissolute riot accompanied the austerities of fanatical devotion.

Meanwhile the German princes were highly offended at the insult offered to their dignity by Boccold's presumptuous usurpation of royal honors; and the profligate manners of his followers, which were a reproach to the Christian name, filled men of all professions with horror. Luther, who had testified against this fanatical spirit on its first appearance, now deeply lamented its progress, and having exposed the delusion with great strength of argument, as well as acrimony of style, called loudly on all the states of Germany to put a stop to a phrenzy no less pernicious to society, than fatal to religion. The emperor, occupied with other cares and projects, had not leisure to attend to such a distant object; but the princes of the empire, assembled by the king of the Romans, voted a supply of men and money to the bishop of Munster, who, being unable to keep a sufficient army on foot, had converted the siege of the town into a blockade. The forces raised in consequence of this resolution were put under the command of an officer of experience, who approaching the town towards the end of spring, in the year one thousand five hundred and thirty-five pressed it more closely than formerly; but found the fortifications so strong, and so dilligently guarded, that he durst not attempt an assault. It was now above fifteen months since the Anabaptists had established their dominion in Munster; they had during that time undergone prodigious fatigue in working on the fortifications, and performing military duty. Notwithstanding the prudent attention of their king to provide for their subsistence, and his frugal as well as regular economy in their public meals, they began to feel the approach of famine. Several small bodies of their brethren, who were advancing to their assistance from the Low Countries, had been intercepted and cut to pieces; and, while all Germany was ready to combine against them, they had no prospect of succour. But such was the ascendancy which Boccold had acquired over the multitude, and so powerful the fascination of enthusiasm, that their hopes were as sanguine as ever, and they hearkened with implicit credulity to the visions and predictions of their prophets, who assured them, that the Almighty would speedily interpose, in order to deliver the city. The faith however, of some few, shaken by the violence and length of their sufferings, began to fail; but being suspected of an inclination to surrender to the enemy, they were punished with immediate death, as guilty of impiety in distrusting the power of God.

By this time the besieged endured the utmost rigour of famine; but they chose rather to suffer hardships, the recital of which is shocking to humanity, than to listen to the terms of capitulation offered them by the bishop. At last, a deserter,



whom they had taken into their service, being either less intoxicated with the fumes of enthusiasm, or unable any longer to bear such distress, made his escape to the enemy. He informed their general of a weak part in their fortifications which he had observed, and assuring them that the besieged, exhausted with hunger and fatigue, kept watch there with little care, he offered to lead a party thither in the night. The proposal was accepted, and a chosen body of troops appointed for the service; who scaling the walls unperceived, seized one of the gates, and admitted the rest of the army. The Anabaptists, though surprised, defended themselves in the market-place with valour, heightened by despair; but being overpowered by numbers, and surrounded on every hand, most of them were slain, and the remainder taken prisoners. Among the last were the king and Knipperdoling. The king, loaded with chains, was carried from city to city as a spectacle to gratify the curiosity of the people, and was exposed to all their insults. His spirit, however, was not broken or humbled by this sad reverse of his condition; and he adhered with unshaken firmness to the distinguishing tenets of his sect. After this, he was brought back to Munster, the scene of his royalty and crimes, and put to death with tortures, which he bore with astonishing fortitude. This extraordinary man, who had been able to acquire such amazing dominion over the minds of his followers, and to excite commotions so dangerous to society, was only twenty-six years of age.

Together with its monarch, the kingdom of the Anabaptists came to an end. Their principles on certain points of doctrine having taken deep root in the Low Countries, the party still subsists there, though somewhat divided and scattered. Numbers of them united under a celebrated leader by the name of Mennon Simonis, and are hence denominated Mennonites. By a singular revolution, they have become not only pacific in their habits, but hold it unlawful to wage war, and even refuse to accept of civil offices. At present, neither Mennonites nor any others who have sprung from the Anabaptists, appear to retain any of those licentious and extravagant views which prevailed at Munster. Though they still retain sentiments which distinguish them from other religious societies, they are generally respected for their morality and rectitude of conduct. Nor is it just to charge all the insurrections of those times, whether at Munster or other places, where the Anabaptists had societies, to that class of people. The first insurgents groaned under severe oppression, and took up arms in defence of their civil rights. The Anabaptists appear rather to have seized the occasion than to have been the prime movers. That a large proportion were Anabaptists, seem indisputable; at the same time

it appears from History, that great numbers of them were Roman Catholics, and many others without any settled religious principles.

The name Anabaptist was given to signify, that persons baptized in infancy, ought to be baptized *anew*! But those who believe in immersion as the only evangelical mode of baptism, do not admit that it is applicable to them; because the persons whom they baptize, they consider as never having been baptized before, though they may have received the application of water, either by sprinkling or pouring. Hence the great body of those who agree in this view of baptism are now called, not Anabaptists, but Baptists.

The Antinomians arose about the same period. Their founder was John Agricola, a native of Aisleben, originally also a disciple of Luther. The supporters of the popish doctrines deducing a considerable portion of the arguments on which they rested their defence, from the doctrines of the old law; this over-zealous reformer was encouraged by the success of his master to attack the very foundation of their arguments, and to deny that any part of the Old Testament was intended as a rule of faith or practice to the disciples of Christ. Thus he not only rejected the moral authority of even the ten commandments; but he and his followers, conceiving some of the expressions in the writings of the apostles in too liberal a sense, produced a system, which appears in many respects scarcely consistent with the moral attributes of the Deity.

The principal doctrines which at present bear this appellation, are said to be as follows: 1st. That the law ought not to be proposed to the people as a rule of manners, nor used in the church as a means of instruction; and that the gospel alone is to be inculcated and explained, both in the churches and in the schools of learning. 2d. That the justification of sinners is an immanent and eternal act of God, not only preceding all acts of sin, but the existence of the sinner himself.\* 3d. That justification by faith is no more than a manifestation to us of what was done before we had a being. 4th. That men ought not to doubt of their faith, or question whether they believe in Christ. 5th. That God sees no sin in believers, and they are not bound to confess sin, mourn for it, or pray that it may be forgiven. 6th. That God is not angry with the elect, nor does he punish them for their sin. 7th. That by God's laying our iniquities

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\* This is the opinion of most, who are styled Antinomians, though some suppose, with Dr. Cress, that the elect were justified at the same time of Christ's death.



upon Christ, he became as completely sinful as we, and we as completely righteous as Christ. 8th. That believers need not fear either their own sins or the sins of others, since neither can do them any injury. 9th. That the new covenant is not made properly with us, but with Christ for us; and that covenant is all of it a promise, having no conditions for us to perform; for faith, repentance, and obedience, are not conditions on our part, but Christ's, and that he repented, believed, and obeyed for us. 10th. That sanctification is not a proper evidence of justification.

It is not extraordinary that, while all the different doctrines of the church were destined to undergo so severe an examination, some of the opinions of Arius and the other opponents of the doctrine of the Trinity should be revived. The first of the reformers who distinguished himself on this side of the question was John Campanus, who, before the confession of Augsburg was presented, began to publish opinions. About the same period Michael Servetus, a Spanish physician, appeared on the same side, and with much vehemence opposed the orthodox belief. Servetus was born at Villa Nueva, in the kingdom of Arragon, and after a variety of adventures settled at Vienne, in Dauphine, under the patronage of the mild and liberal prelate of that see, and there applied himself successfully to the practice of his profession. The enthusiasm of reformation, however invaded his tranquillity in this situation, and he was engaged by some means or other to enter into a controversy with Calvin, in which there is reason to believe that the latter indulged in hostile and vindictive feelings against him. In 1553, Servetus printed his most famous work, entitled *Christianismi Restitutio*. The book was published in France, but printed secretly without the author's name, and conveyed out of the kingdom. But some of his Protestant enemies who ought to have been better employed, succeeded in exciting the Inquisition against him; and he was thrown into prison by the authority of that tribunal. Here, however, he was suffered clandestinely to escape, and only burnt in effigy. In attempting to pass into Italy over the lake of Geneva, he was recognized by Calvin, who requested one of the Syndics to arrest and imprison him. Servetus was arrested, put into prison, and afterwards brought before the council as a heretic. Forty heretical errors were proved against him, but he refused to renounce them. One of the charges was that of blasphemy. The result of his trial was, that he was condemned to be burnt alive. On the 27th of October, 1553, he was committed to the fire; but as the wind blew the flames from him, two hours elapsed before he was freed from his sufferings.

Concerning the part which Calvin took in this cruel and most unfortunate affair, Dr. Hawies in his History of the Church, when speaking of the sufferings of Gruet, Balsac, Castalio, Oclinnus and particularly of Servetus, has the following paragraph. "Far from justifying these severities, I esteem this as the foulest blot in Calvin's otherwise fair escutcheon; nor do I think the spirit of the times any exculpation for violating the plainest dictates of the word of God and common sense, 'that liberty of conscience and private judgment are every man's birth right;' and where nothing immoral, or tending by some overt act to disturb the peace of societies appears, there all punishment for matters of opinion must be utterly unchristian and unjustifiable."

The opinions of Servetus seem to have approached nearer to Sabellianism than either to those of Arius or the modern Socinians. He held that Christ might properly be called the God, since the eternal spirit of the Godhead was united to the man Christ Jesus. He held also that another portion of the same spirit was diffused through all nature, and directed the course of things, and actuated the minds of men agreeably to the counsels and designs of the Father. He also rejected the use of infant baptism.

The origin of Socinianism appears to have been some years precedent to the appearance of those persons from whom the sect has derived its name. At a very early period of the reformation there were among the Anabaptists, and other sects of reformers, several persons who rejected or who doubted of the doctrine of the Trinity as professed at that period. The opinions which were cherished by these persons were equally obnoxious to the Catholics, the Lutherans, and Calvinists; and opposition from foreign enemy is generally productive of union in the party which is opposed. To avoid the evils which they might experience in Germany or Italy, numbers of them retired into Poland, which, either from its remoteness, or from the laxity of the government, seemed to promise a more secure retreat. When arrived at the land of freedom, they found themselves involved in the utmost perplexity of doctrines. Some had embraced the Arian system; some the doctrine of Paul of Samosata; and some of them opinions which till then probably never had an existence. About the same period, a society was formed in the neighborhood of Venice, which consisted of about forty men of letters, who held regular assemblies, in which they discussed all points of religion, and particularly those relating to the Trinity, with the utmost freedom. The society however being discovered, the members were dispersed different ways, and several of them suffered by the hand of the executioner.



One of the most eminent of this Society, Lælius Socinus or Sozzini, escaped into Poland in 1551, and by his influence the jarring opinions of the Unitarian sectaries began to assume the appearance of a regular system. His visits to Poland were indeed but short; but what he left undone was perfected by his disciples. Under the protection of J. Sienienus, palatine of Podolia, who built purposely for their use the city of Racow in the district of Sendomir, the Unitarians of Poland almost assumed the consequence of an established religion; and in the year 1574, they published a summary of their principles, under the title of the Catechism or Confession of the Unitarians.

The abilities of Faustus Socinus, who professed to deduce his religious system from the papers of his uncle Lælius, imparted fresh vigour to the society. He new-moulded the articles of their faith. The ancient catechism, which was no more than a rude and incoherent sketch, was altered and improved by Socinus and other Unitarian doctors, and was published under the title of the Catechism of Racow. In this station they enjoyed an undisturbed series of prosperity for several years, till in the beginning of the succeeding century, some Socinian students at Racow were so imprudent as in a paroxysm of enthusiasm to break in pieces a crucifix with stones. Such an act of violence excited the attention of the senate of Poland, who, caused their academy to be levelled to the ground, their church to be shut up, and their printing presses to be destroyed; and from that period, the cause of Socinianism has sensibly declined in that part of Europe, where it first assumed an aspect of prosperity. From Poland, the Socinian doctrines made their way into Transylvania about 1563, and were chiefly indebted for their success to the address and industry of George Blandratius, physician to Sigismund, the reigning prince. The Socinian faith was embraced by the prince, and many of the principal nobility; and though the Batori, who were afterwards chosen dukes of Transylvania, were by no means well affected to the unitarian cause; yet the sect had acquired so deep a root that it has never been entirely eradicated from that province.

The followers of Socinus asserted, 1st. That all our knowledge of divinity must be derived from the scriptures, but that our natural reason is the proper interpreter of them. 2d. They allowed considerable latitude in the accommodation of Scripture to human reason, asserting that great allowances must be made for the strong figurative language and oriental idioms with which these writings abound. 3dly. They denied the plenary inspiration of the sacred writers, and insinuated that mistakes had crept into their writings. 4thly. Having proceeded thus far, they endeavoured to strip revealed religion of every

circumstance not clearly intelligible by human reason. With respect therefore to the grand point on which they differed from other Christians; they altogether denied the divinity of Christ, or equality with the Father, but admitted him to have been an extraordinary person miraculously produced, and commissioned as a divine teacher, in whom the prophecies relating to the Messiah were completely though not literally fulfilled. They admitted also the whole history of the ascension and glorification of Christ in its literal acceptation. 5thly. They held the phrase Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, to be merely a figurative mode of expression to denote the power or energy of God.

Though these are the general outlines of the doctrines professed by the followers of Socinus, yet this sect was subdivided into several parties, who differed materially from each other with respect to certain articles of faith. The Hudneians are said to have denied the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ. The Parvonians on the contrary asserted, that he had been engendered or produced out of nothing before the creation of the world. And the Stancarians allowed the mediatorial character of Jesus Christ, which the others seem to have denied.

Some sects were distinguished in this age merely by carrying there abhorrence of popish errors further than their great leaders, Luther and Calvin. Such were the followers of Zuinglius, of whom respectful mention has been already made.

The Brownists in England differed from the established church chiefly in respect to church government, which they asserted ought to be democratical. The Humiliati in France and Spain, seem only to have been distinguished by their monkish devotion, and belief that the whole of religion consisted in prayer and contemplation.\* The Familists, or family of love, in Holland, considered the dispensation by Christ as imperfect, and expected a fuller revelation to be made to themselves. The Amsdorfians and Osiantrians contended that salvation was wrought by faith alone, and not by good works; while the Molinists and Synergists were of the opinion that the will of man co-operated with the grace of God in effecting his eternal happiness.

The invention of printing produced altogether a new era in literature; and such was the rapid multiplication of books after that period, that merely to specify the authors in the departments of theology and sacred criticism would, for each century, require a separate volume. It is necessary therefore to confine

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\* The French Illuminati of the 18th century, were a secret society of infidels, united against religion, and against civil government; and entirely different from those of that name, in the sixteenth century.



our views within a very limited compass, and to content ourselves with a brief character of only the most eminent authors.

From the complexion of the times, and from the important controversies which were agitated during the period, it will be evident that controversial theology engaged the attention of by far the greater number, and the most eminent of the authors of this century. The works both of Luther and Calvin are voluminous, and replete with learning, and strong and profound argument. But the most elegant scholar, and perhaps the most amiable character among the reformers, was Philip Melancthon. He was an early convert to the doctrines of Luther, and continued his steady friend to the conclusion of his life. The character of this excellent person was tinged with a degree of timidity which would have utterly incapacitated him for a leader in these tumultuous scenes; but his extensive learning, his candid and impartial spirit, united to his correct judgment, and the classical elegance of his style, qualified him for the part of an excellent auxiliary. Theodore Beza is well known as a translator and commentator upon the Holy Scriptures. For his learning and abilities he was deservedly placed at the head of the university of Geneva on its first institution.

Though not publicly connected with the reformers, or openly professing their doctrines, no man in this age contributed more indirectly, to the removal of error, than the celebrated Erasmus; since there was scarcely an opinion or practice of the Romish church assailed by Luther, which had not previously been animadverted on, and ridiculed by this acute and satirical author. Erasmus was the illegitimate son of a literary person of the name of Gerard, by Margaret, daughter to a physician at Gouda, whom her relations would not permit to marry the man by whom she had been seduced. He lost both father and mother at about fourteen, was, in the early part of his life, a singing boy at the cathedral of Utrecht, and was afterwards forced by his guardians to become a regular canon in the monastery of Stein, near Ghent. He was ordained a priest in 1492, at about the age of twenty-six, and was invited by the bishop of Cambray to accompany him to Rome. With the permission of his superiors, Erasmus quitted his monastery, went to Paris to complete his studies, and after several journeys into Flanders, England, and Italy, settled at length at Basil, where he continued till that city embraced Zuinglianism in 1529. He afterwards lived for some time in Friburgh, whence he returned to Basil, where he died in 1536.

Literature is not only obliged to Erasmus for his own admirable compositions, but for the revival of many of the most valuable of the ancient classics and fathers of the church. Few scien-

ces escaped his attention; he wrote occasionally on divinity, philosophy, morals, rhetoric, and grammar, and translated the New Testament into Latin, and several of the Greek fathers. His free style of writing involved him in several controversies; and the Lutherans and the Catholics were equally objects of his animadversion. His Dialogues are the best known of all his writings, and will be admired as a work of genius as long as there remains any taste for the wit and spirit of Athens, or for the language and eloquence of ancient Rome. He lived and died a timid reformer and member of the church of Rome.

Next in order to Erasmus, his contemporary and friend Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England, may properly be placed among the patrons and improvers of polite literature. More strongly attached to the Romish faith than his friend Erasmus, and not exempt from the charge of bigotted cruelty, this excellent scholar fell a victim to the sanguinary resentment of Henry VIII. and suffered death upon the scaffold, the 17th of June, 1535.

Inferior to none that has been mentioned either in taste or learning, it would be culpable to omit a tribute of applause to the elegant and classical George Buchanan. As an historian, his works will not only be resorted to by all who are desirous of useful information, but also by those who wish to form a style upon the chaste model of Roman elegance. As a poet, he is perhaps the first among the modern imitators of the Latin classics. As the friend of civil and religious liberty, he is entitled to a still nobler distinction; nor will the apologists for a weak and wicked princess be able to fix a slander upon his reputation in the eyes of impartial inquirers.

Castalio is also deserving of a respectable place among the scholars of this day. He translated the Bible into elegant Latin, also into French, and displayed his various and extensive knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew by several other publications. His *Colloquia Sacra*, in elegant Latin, was published in four volumes duodecimo. He was some time regent of the College at Geneva, until he was driven from it and banished on account of his religious opinions. Being poor, he was oppressed in his circumstances, having a wife and eight children. The magistrates of Basil, to which place he fled, received with kindness this ingenious exile, and gave him the Greek professorship in their university. He died at Basil in 1564, aged forty-eight years.

John Reuchlin, a German, sometimes known by the name of Capnio, who was elevated, for his literary talents, from a very obscure station, to the rank of a nobleman, Ludovicus Vives, of Valencia in Spain, J. Budeus, John Lipsius, Polydore Vir-



gil, and the incomparable Scaliger are also deserving of much applause, the zealous and successful promoters of useful learning.

Philosophy as well as religion underwent a reformation in this century, by the publication of the systems of Nicholas Copernicus and Tycho Brahe. These bold invaders of ancient prejudice, had scarcely less to encounter than Luther, in the establishment of the truth.

The labours of the Stephens's will be remembered with gratitude by every admirer of ancient literature.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

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### SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

#### PROGRESS OF THE EXTERNAL CHURCH--PROTESTANT CHURCH.

AFTER ages of gloomy superstition, the reign of ignorance, and primeval night, we have seen the sun of righteousness rising with healing in his wings, to dispel the darkness, and illumine the path, which alone can lead the faithful to the light of eternal day.

The struggle in Europe, between truth and error, had been long and obstinate; and, however blessed the issue, the effects of the contest were greatly to be deplored, as having produced wars, which desolated the face of many countries, and conflicts in all the lands of Christendom; sometimes as fatal to the persecutors, as to the persecuted.

The combatants now had in a sort rested on their arms, and precluded, by the peace of Augsburg, from attempting any considerable inroads on each other's territories by violence, the Catholics and Protestants began to plan how they might extend their influence over the regions which had been lately discovered. The former, especially, hoped thereby to recover some indemnity in the new Continent, for their losses in the old.

Herein, indeed, the Catholics possessed a great and manifest advantage, not only as united under one spiritual head, but also because the grand discoveries had been made by those who professed the faith of Rome, and continued under her obedience. These all equally wished with the popes themselves, to propagate their own religion, and thus confirm a surer and safer dominion over those whom they had brought under the yoke, or hoped by monkish auxiliaries more easily to subdue. Nothing could more exactly concur with the ambitious views of the papal see. A host of missionaries rushed into the battle, zealously disposed to spread the knowledge of such Christianity as they held, through all the countries into which the arms or commerce of Spain and Portugal had penetrated. We have seen the institution of Jesuits expressly devoted to this object:



nor were the other orders, roused by their zeal and emulation, behind them in the work.

To direct their efforts more effectually for spreading the popish religion, and bringing the subjected nations, and others, within her pale, was among the most important objects of the Church of Rome. With this view, the Pope established a congregation of Cardinals, *de propaganda fide*, whose name expressed their office. A. D. 1622. To defray every expence, a vast endowment, successively increased, furnished the most ample means. The missionaries were educated, conveyed, and supplied with every necessary. Seminaries were established for such heathen converts as should be sent to Europe from the different nations. Books were printed in all languages for the use of the missions. A provision was made for erecting schools, and affording the poor assistance, whether by medicine, or under any temporal want. In short, every thing which could forward the missions, was liberally supplied. A. D. 1663. France copied the example of Rome, and formed an establishment for the same purposes. Regiments of friars, black, white, and grey, were ready for embarkation, however distant the voyage, or perilous the service.

The Jesuits claimed the first rank, as due to their zeal, learning, and devotedness to the holy see. The Dominicans, Franciscans, and other orders, disputed the palm with them; and jealous of their superiority, as is the case usually between rivals for fame, they impeached the purity of their motives; imputed their zeal to ambitious purposes; and accused them of subjecting their converts to their own order, with a view to make merchandise of them. Into these accusations probably much truth entered, but more envy. Indeed, the religion which any of these taught, was almost, if not altogether, as far removed from the simplicity that is in Christ, as the paganism from which the converts were drawn. From the commencement of the missions, the congregation of cardinals has been employed in hearing and examining innumerable memorials and criminations against the Jesuits, the most grievous and disgraceful to the christian name, it must be confessed, after considering the accusations, and the avowed principle of popery, "That every fraud and artifice is pious, that tends to promote the interests of the Romish Church," the Jesuits seem fully vindicated. Admitting this allowed principle, they acted wisely. None can refuse them the praise of indefatigable labour; and little doubt can be entertained, that the issue of their missionary efforts would have been very different from what has happened, if they had not been so often checked in their career; their fidelity to the several states, under whose patronage they acted, rendered suspicious; and

their devotedness to the see of Rome itself, questioned. Their rivals insinuated, that they meant only the glory, riches, and increase of their own order; and sacrificed to these every other consideration. Whether this was really the case or not, their steps appear directed with the most consummate skill, and crowned with astonishing success. They studied the characters of those with whom they had to do, and suited themselves alike to the peasant and the noble. They selected from their society, the instruments best qualified for their several spheres of action. They were physicians, astronomers, mathematicians, painters, musicians, artists, in every occupation, that could render their talents subservient to missionary purposes. Their gentle and insinuating manners gained the confidence of the natives where they resided. They made themselves agreeable and useful to the superior ranks; they condescended to instruct the meanest; they consulted the different inclinations and habits of the several nations, and the individuals of each. In short, they determined to become all things to all men, that they might obtain the great object in their view. The new world, and the Asiatic regions, were the chief fields of their labours. They penetrated into the uncultivated recesses of America; civilized the savages, and won them to habits of industry. They visited the untried regions of Siam Tonkin, and Cochin-China. They entered the vast empire of China itself; insinuated themselves into the confidence of that suspicious people, and numbered millions among their converts. They dared affront the dangers of the tyrannical government of Japan, and even there extended their conquests in a manner almost incredible. In India they assumed the garb and austerities of the Brahmins; and boasted on the coasts of Malabar of a thousand converts baptized in one year by a single missionary. They could alike familiarise themselves with the magnificence and luxury of the court of Pekin, or live on water and vegetables, like the Jogis; and whatever their adversaries may object to the looseness of their moral system, the conduct of the missionaries was unimpeachable; otherwise they had neither attracted or preserved the veneration of their disciples—if they admitted of relaxation, it was for them, and not for themselves.

That their sufferings were great, as their labours were successful, we have the most authentic evidence. The dreadful massacres in China and Japan, proved them sincere; and at least, as true Catholics as any at Rome or elsewhere.

In China, a flourishing æra gave bright hopes of perpetuity, but they were blasted. The same effects produced the same calamities; and though the present century left the Jesuits possessed of a noble church at Pekin, within the imperial precincts,



and their missionaries spread through all that country, and the Mongal Tartary, the next saw them utterly expelled from the empire, with great carnage, and sunk, never to rise up again.

In Africa, where the Portuguese power prevailed, the Capuchins were chiefly employed, less artful and able indeed than the disciples of Loyola, but equally zealous. They relate the wonders wrought by their ministry at Benin, Soffala, and the West and Southern coasts of Africa: but those who have seen these negro Christians, the Catholics themselves being judges, will with difficulty admit them to a place in the Church of Christ. Though they have been baptised, and learned to make the sign of the cross, in all the essentials of Christianity, whether of doctrine or practice, they differ little from their countrymen. It is among the awful scenes, viewed with anguish by every real Christian, that so immense a region of the globe should be left to this day sunk in Pagan and Mahomedan darkness, and lying in the shadow of death, and few efforts made to pluck the brands from the burning.

Not much more can be said for all the Catholic conversions made from Mexico to the Straits of Magellan. There, Spaniards and Portuguese are alike buried in ignorance, superstition and profligacy, even below their bigotted countrymen in Europe. With such examples and such instructors, the state of the poor natives may be well imagined; immersed in their ancient superstitions, they have added all the ceremonies and follies of their new religion, to the absurdities of the old.

Yet let it be remembered, that however Jesuits or Capuchians may be despised or condemned by Protestants, their conduct is to us highly reproachful. That we, who vaunt a purer Christianity, and have so many nobler motives to animate our zeal, have been hitherto so backward in the work of heathen missions, so indifferent about enlarging the borders of Immanuel's kingdom, and so cold in our love towards the souls purchased by his most precious blood, must be confessed to our guilt and shame, and can neither be too deeply lamented, or too soon amended.

Among the Protestants, it must be owned, the efforts to spread the gospel in the heathen world were few and feeble. A zealous Lutheran, Ernest, Baron of Wells, felt for the honor of his profession, and for the glory of the Lord, and sought to form a society for a Protestant mission; but a variety of impediments disappointed his purposes, and no effectual benefit resulted from the attempt.

The two great nations of English and Dutch were too much engrossed with their commercial concerns to take religion into their view, and utterly neglected this great object. Such a

scheme, indeed, was formed under Charles I. and a society appointed under the sanction of parliament for this purpose, in 1647: but the confusions which followed, prevented any considerable efforts being made during the civil wars. And zealous as Cromwell professed himself for Christianity, he was too much taken up in securing his precarious dominion at home, to extend his concern to the heathen abroad. At the restoration of Charles II. the society was re-established, but the temper of that reign was little missionary—the project languished in lukewarmness. All that can be called missionary labour at that time, must be ascribed to the Puritans and Non-conformists, who fled to America to escape the persecutions of government at home. Some of these men of God distinguished their zeal in labours among the poor Indians, which were crowned with tokens of divine favour, in 1633. The names of Brainard, Mayhew, and Shephard, deserve to be had in remembrance: and above all, the excellent Elliot, called the Apostle of the Indians, a title merited by his indefatigable labours, and signal success among them; and more especially by his translation of the Scriptures into their language, and thus enabling them to read and understand the oracles of God. These attempts in America roused the attention of many at home; and another society, noble in its institution, was formed for *promoting Christian knowledge*. I wish I could report the mighty effects, and the zealous labours of the missionaries sent forth under their auspices. Some good, however, has been done in India, and elsewhere, and particularly in the immense number of bibles and religious tracts, which have been dispersed through all parts of the British dominions; and never can the word of God be perused without being the saviour of life unto life, or death unto death.

The amazing progress in all scientific attainments, peculiarly marks this age; never, perhaps, before was such a constellation of sages seen upon this stage of earth, who carried philosophy to its highest pitch. From the great Bacon, Lord Verulam, who led the way at the commencement of this era, to the greater Sir Isaac Newton, supposed justly to be the first of human beings for intellect, discoveries, and extent of knowledge. England claims, and justly, the first place in the temple of literary fame. But other nations boast also their productions; Italy her Galileo, France her Cassendi and Descartes, Germany her Leibnitz, and Denmark her Tycho Brahe, with a thousand other names of eminence, who eclipsed all those who had preceded them in mathematics, astronomy and natural philosophy; and indeed, in most other branches of knowledge, physics, chemistry, history, physiology, and every kind of literature, sacred or



profane. In every nation the language became more polished, and the writers as elegant in their expressions, as deep in their researches. But these must be passed hastily over, as the more immediate subject of the Church of Christ will furnish abundant matter.

Yet it must not be forgotten, that amidst this vast accession to the stock of human knowledge, many reputed geniuses arose, whose fame (or infamy) was built upon the most daring attacks on revelation, or the most insidious attempts to undermine it. To philosophise above what is written, and for vain man to affect to be wiser than God, is too correspondent with his fallen nature, ready to abuse the noblest faculties to the most perverse purposes. Of these, whilst France furnished her Vanini, and Holland the Jew Spinoza, England exhibited, with a general profligacy of manners, under Charles II. some of the most impious writers, and the most infidel, who took abundant pains to disseminate their deistical and atheistical tenets, and to embolden in his wickedness, the fool who had said (or at least hoped) in his heart, that there is no God. Such were Hobbes, Toland, and the Lords Herbert, Rochester, and Shaftesbury, who endeavoured, partly by reasoning, partly by ridicule, to overturn the faith of the unstable professor, or to harden the hearts of the profligate. Many, indeed, instantly arose to lift up the shield against the fiery darts of the wicked; and that great and able Robert Boyle, who is said to have always read the Scripture on his knees, zealous for divine truth, as eminent in philosophical discoveries, instituted a constant annual course of lectures in defence of that religion, which these sceptical philosophers endeavoured to supplant and destroy. Let it be however particularly noted, that the great luminaries of the age, were the strenuous defenders of divine revelation. Newton, Locke, Boyle, Maclaurin, and others, alike distinguished for science, gloried in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Not that the faith of the gospel stands in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.

The general state of the Church will be seen as we pass in review the several members of which it was composed; the Papists, the Greeks, and the Protestants; the latter of which will more especially engage our attention, as in the others little else will be found than darkness, and the shadow of death.

Christ is not divided: unhappily his people are. But if they cultivated the spirit of love and meekness, bearing and forbearing with one another, the little differences of opinion would never be permitted to disturb the unity of the spirit, so prejudiced as not to acknowledge, that we are all one in Christ Jesus; why not then love one another out of a pure heart fervently? The time, will come—"Blessed are the peace-makers, for

they shall be called the children of God." It will be happy for the church of Christ, when divine charity shall enlarge her borders, and bigotry be driven to her gloomy cell.

The Protestant church comprehends *Lutherans*, the *reformed* or Calvinists, and a variety of other denominations, that cannot immediately be classed under the two great general divisions.

We have seen the desolations produced by the ambition and bigotry of the house of Austria, instigated by Rome and her Jesuitical crew, hoping that they could down with it, down even to the ground. The great Head of the Church was otherwise minded. The bush burned and was not consumed. But the Lutheran cause suffered also by the defection of some of its most strenuous supporters. In the beginning of this century, 1604, Maurice, Landgrave of Hesse, a man of very eminent attainments, embraced, after deep investigation, the Calvinistic system of doctrine: and new-moddled the university of Marpurg, and the ecclesiastical establishment of Hesse, after the reformed plan: though not without great opposition from the Eutheran divines. Yet though he thought himself bound to promote the truths he had embraced, and to exercise the authority with which he was invested in his own dominions, it is to be observed to his honor, that he shewed Christian moderation and temper in the disputes which could not but be the consequence; and he is said not to have been chargeable with any acts of oppression and violence, leaving a generous liberty of conscience to all his subjects. The elector of Brandenburg followed his example, in 1614, and declared for the reformed religion, without enforcing the doctrine of the decrees, or the decisions of Dort, but left every man to abide Lutheran or Calvinist, according to his conscience; dispensing his favours to both without partiality, and recommending a spirit of conciliation; to abstain from offensive terms, or injurious aspersions; consenting that the rites which were objected to might be abolished; and entreating, that wherein they still differed, they would bear with each other, and cultivate a spirit of peace and patience. But to this the Lutheran clergy refused to consent, and not only excited fierce debates, but stirred up the people to a spirit of discontent, and alienation from their sovereign, and tumults which only force could suppress. The Saxon divines took part with their brethren, and unhappily blew up the flames of discord, to the great injury of their cause, and the hurt of their university of Wirtemberg, which the elector was compelled, by the treatment he had received, to forbid his subjects any more to visit.

Good men on both sides lamented, that when the Philistines were upon them, the sons of Israel were setting their swords



every man against his fellow; and earnestly wished to reconcile the two great bodies of protestants together, that they might be more united, and form a firmer phalanx against their popish invaders. To hope for a uniformity in opinion, was a blessing, in the present state of human infirmity, and under the prejudices of education, not to be expected: but to soften down the angles of asperity—never to dispute passionately—to seek not for victory, but truth—to give the most favourable explications to the terms used on both sides—to bring forth the great fundamental principles, in which Calvinists and Lutherans are agreed—and in the deeper and abstruser points of difference, to approach as near as possible—and where they could not unite, to agree to bear with each other in the disputed articles, and to keep them as much as possible from producing vain contention, which only beget ill-blood, and not conviction—these were the objects of the conciliators. Herein the reformed, it is allowed, were the first to concede and make approaches; allowing their Lutheran brethren not to have erred in any fundamental doctrine. But the Lutheran divines were more tenacious and less yielding, and refused to acknowledge as much of the Calvinistic tenets; and rejected with much disdain the conciliatory offers of their brethren. Mutual reproaches and recriminations tended not to heal but to widen the breach.

In 1615, the peace-loving James I. endeavored to interpose the weight of his influence, and to solicit this desirable union among the protestant churches. He employed for this end, the famous Du Moulin, to sound the different parties: but he soon grew discouraged, when he found that the Lutherans testified an utter aversion to accede to the proposal.

In 1631, however, the French protestants, in a synod held at Charenton, determined to give their Lutheran brethren a testimony of their cordial regard, and to open a door for any return which they might judge fit, by declaring, “that the Lutheran profession was truly conformable to the gospel, and free from fundamental errors.” But no overtures were the consequence.

In 1631, one conference more, indeed, was held at Leipsic, between the divines of the two communions; and the spirit, temper and moderation with which it was managed, gave hope it would reunite them. The jealousy of the Lutherans, that some artifice was concealed under the apparent candor and concessions of their brethren, disappointed the happy issue which was expected. After all, the same unchristian distance remained.

In 1645, a more comprehensive scheme, which should comprehend Catholics, could hardly succeed in Poland.

In 1661, earnest to succeed, the landgrave of Hesse renewed

the attempt to bring the Protestants nearer to each other; and now the fraternal embrace, which closed the conference, promised greater future union; at least mutual forbearance and love. But the moderate men, who retired from this pleasing scene, were unable to inspire their Lutheran brethren with their own candor and charity; and only drew upon themselves the invectives of the bigots, as betraying by their indulgence the cause they were deputed to defend. Thus often has it been the lot of the noblest spirits to desire to do good to the ungrateful and the prejudiced, and to be abused for their labors of love.

What the authority of princes, and the weight of synods could not accomplish, individuals might well despair of effecting. Yet one kind and resolute spirit, undismayed by the difficulties, resolved to devote himself to the work; which during forty years, he unweariedly pursued. Wherever he went and made his object known, he was generally received with kindness, and heard with attention; but after all his toils and travels through the protestant regions of Europe, he found obstructions insurmountable, and bigotry and prejudice that refused to bend. But he shall not lose his reward. The Prince of Peace will remember John Dury.

The good bishop of Stregnez in Sweden, deserves a memorial for his zealous concurrence with the travelling Scottish pacificator: and Calixtus, the divinity professor of Helmstadt, seconded warmly the same noble design; but they brought a nest of Lutheran hornets about their ears. The cry of the church being in danger drove the peace-making bishop from his see, to a retirement from the clamors of party: and Calixtus was glad to be hid in the grave from the torrent of abuse and misrepresentation; as sacrificing truth to conciliation. Thus obstinately did the Lutheran divines reject all approaches to communion with their reformed brethren. Unhappily they were not less divided among themselves. Incensed at those who wished to heal the breaches, and to engage men's hearts in a spirit of union and piety, the larger body of the Lutheran church, especially the Saxon divines, treated them as innovators in religion, and branded them with the names Syncretists or Pietists. An account of these will include the most important concerns of the Lutheran church; especially in the point which is the great object which we are pursuing, under every denomination of christians, to discover the true spiritual church.

At the head of the Syncretists was Calixtus. The charge laid against him, was his attempt to unite all bodies of professing christians in mutual forbearance and charity with each other, notwithstanding the points of opinion in which they might differ, and if possible, to enable them, without bitterness and mutual



anathemas, to meet in some general principles wherein they all agreed; and to leave all other disputes aside. At least, if any differences were discussed, that it should be done in love, and in the spirit of meekness, without breach of communion. He was of opinion, with his friend John Dury, that the Apostle's creed contained every article necessary to be believed for salvation: that the ten commandments were a sufficient rule of life; and the Lord's prayer included every essential petition which a christian needed to ask of God. All, therefore, who held these general principles, might, he trusted, give each other the right hand of fellowship, and hope to meet together in the world of the blessed; whether Papists, Reformed, or Lutherans; as each professed to hold these in veneration, and to admit their indisputable truth. No man appears a more determined protestant than Calixtus, or has written with greater force against the errors of the Romish church; though he was abused as half a Catholic, because he maintained, that in the church of Rome the fundamental articles were still held; and that salvation might there be obtained, even though men were under many mistakes and prejudices of education. He admitted the union of churches was impracticable, under the decisions of the council of Trent; but, that the union of charity might be cultivated between the members of the different churches, holding the first common principles of christianity. The divines of Helmstadt united with their colleague in this endeavour: many of their brethren, at Rintelen, Konningsburg, and Jena, approved of the general outlines of conciliation proposed by them; but they met with the fiercest opposition, were esteemed traitors to the Lutheran cause, and apostates from the Lutheran faith: and charged with both inclining to the reformed, and the popish religion. Contradictions so glaring, as only the exasperation of prejudice and party could suppose possible or true. The particulars of all the bitter contests and invectives which this controversy occasioned, with the interposition of the civil magistrate, we shall pass over. It affords but a mortifying lesson of human infirmity, that whoever, or whatever is right, or wrong; wise men, learned men, religious men, should so far deviate from the spirit of truth and meekness. Nor does it give a high opinion of the Saxon divines in particular, who wanted to introduce a new creed of their own sentiments, which could not but have made a division in the Lutheran church. The amiable design of Calixtus, should it be mistaken charity, pleaded for lenity at least instead of such bitterness and malignity, as Calovius, at the head of the Saxon Lutheran doctors expressed: but bigots to churches, and advocates for truth, are very different persons. Did religion, indeed, stand merely in opinion, and one line of

abberation must not be admitted from what is established in each church, who then can be saved? The consequences must be obvious to every enlarged mind, who is at all conversant with the spirit of true christianity.

But the divisions which arose on the account of *Pietism*, were still more to be lamented, as they served but too awfully to demonstrate, that deep piety, in the Lutheran church, was an offensive object, and the pretensions to it judged deserving of the highest censures.

The origin of *Pietism* was certainly the apprehension and conviction, that real religion had greatly declined in the Lutheran church—that the clergy were become too inattentive to the care of men's souls, and too much attached to this world and its emoluments; or too much engrossed with scientific pursuits, foreign to their immediate designation. That there is always too much reason to fear the decline of true godliness, the experience of all ages testifies.

In 1670, the excellent Spener, a man eminent for real truth and godliness, lamented the declensions which he supposed, at least, he beheld around him. He set himself, therefore, to reanimate the languid zeal, and to quicken the diligence of his brethren, by establishing at Frankfort, societies for religious exercises, for prayer, praise, and mutual communications; in order to bind each in a firmer bond, to resist the overflowings of ungodliness, and to bear a living testimony by their conduct, to the truths which they professed to believe. A treatise on the disorders of the church, and the prevailing corruption of manners, with the means best suited to remove them, was circulated by this good man, and awakened very general attention. A variety of persons, in different places, accordingly associated on the plan which Spener had recommended; and, as could not but be the case, awakened the jealousy, and provoked the enmity of the clergy and others whose conversation they reprov'd, not merely by the exhibition of a different conduct, but sometimes by rebukes and charges, not always, perhaps, dictated by prudence, or the meekness of charity. These associations, therefore, met with much opposition; and as popular odium, or the licentiousness of a baser sort, instigated by their enemies, often interrupted their assemblies, the charge of disturbing the peace of the public was laid at their door: and, as usually, some wild-fire is ready to mingle itself with the sacred flame on the altar of truth, persons of an enthusiastic or turbulent disposition, sometimes united with the *Pietists* and gave their adversaries occasion to blaspheme.

The alarm which had gone out against this rising sect, collected greater force, and was viewed as a matter of more serious



import, when the learned professors, Frankius, Schadius, and Antonius, with others, uniting cordially with Spener in his pious designs, began to consider the causes of the decline, which was too evident; and supposed they could trace them principally to the improper manner in which young men at the universities had been trained up for the ministry. Discarding, therefore the metaphysical mode of tuition, and the jargon of the schools, where Aristotle's subtleties had been often more studied than the bible; and a rage for controversies of no real import to improve the understanding, or to affect the heart, occupied the time, and exalted the conceit of the captious disputants; they resolved to alter their mode of lecturing. Taking the oracles of God for their thesis, they endeavoured to make these pure fountains of wisdom and knowledge better understood, both respecting the doctrines therein contained, and the application of them to the conscience of their pupils, in order to the production of the genuine fruits of righteousness and true holiness. These scriptural exercises excited vast attention. In 1689, multitudes pressed to hear them; and, that many were affected by them, and brought to a happy change in their religious conduct, even prejudice could not deny. Malignity, indeed, wished to misrepresent, what had not only its novelty to offend, but the real reproof contained in such conduct to irritate. The other professors charged them with exciting tumults and promoting animosities in the university; and, being abundantly the majority, these good men were called to a public trial, for the innovations which they had attempted; and though declared free from heresy or immorality, were forbidden to proceed any farther with the plans of religious instruction which they had commenced,

Suspended thus from their attempts to edify the students at Leipsic in sacred literature, and driven from their professorships for the Pietism imputed to them, the university of Halle invited Franckius and Antonious thither; and Spener had a similar offer, which he accepted from the Elector of Brandenburg, at Berlin. They pursued there the same line of conduct, and were attended by the same numerous audience and pupils.

The professors and pastors of the Lutheran university of Wirtemberg, were highly incensed at, and condemned those novel practices as detrimental to the interests of the Lutheran church, over which they watched with jealous care: probably they felt it as a reflection upon themselves, that these biblical professors should attract such attention; and their societies formed for prayer and religious exercises, raised an imputation of negligence on the established pastors. For the flame of Pietism had spread through all the Lutheran churches; and, in

every city, town and village, persons arose, professing to be stirred by a divine impression on their minds, to revive the cause of religion, and to arouse the attention of their neighbours to greater seriousness in the concerns of an eternal world. As persons of all conditions and sexes were affected with Pietism, artisans, mechanics and labourers, met together for religious exercises. The illiterate as well as the more instructed, prayed and exhorted in these societies: and, as could not but be the case, when the numbers were considerable, and some among them more forward, zealous, and imprudent, than well informed, occasions of reproach were taken against them; and some, perhaps, justly: and, as is always the case, the irregularities or improper conduct of mistaken individuals, were laid to the charge of the whole body. The clergy especially took a part against these Pietists; and the magistrates being instigated by their fears or jealousies, severe laws were enacted to suppress these societies, and to prevent the spreading of these innovations in the Lutheran Church.

The term Pietist, which was given in derision by the scoffers, to those who attended Franckius and his associates, and lived in a course of strict piety, "was afterwards," says Mosheim, applied to all, who, distinguished by excessive austerity of manners, regardless of truth or opinion, were only intent upon practice, and turned the whole vigour of their efforts towards the attainments of religious feelings and habits." Mosheim was a Lutheran divine, philosophic, and no Pietist. Yet his partial representation speaks nothing unfavourable, when he is compelled to add, as a faithful historian, "that persons of eminent wisdom and sanctity, remarkable for their adherence to truth and love of piety, bore commonly the same opprobrious name." And, in another place, "that none could despise their intentions, without appearing the enemy of practical religion." The truth of the matter is, that zealous godliness, as is usual, provoked the reproaches of the cross. The learned ecclesiastic mistakes, or misrepresents the real character of Franckius and his colleagues. So far were they from being regardless of truth and opinion, that no men more rigidly contended for, or taught more explicitly, the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. They indeed, were no bigots to the Lutheran profession, though they preferred it; but they supposed many of their reformed brethren, equally sound in the fundamental articles of faith with themselves; and therefore they would not refuse their friendship and society, because of the opinions in which they differed. So far, indeed, the charge may be admitted in the fullest latitude, that these good men looked upon the tenets of barren orthodoxy, when not attended with divine power in the



conscience, and purity in the conduct, as nothing worth; and were more earnest to inculcate the necessity of faith, with its effects, than to establish a rigid conformity with the Lutheran definitions. Why it should be supposed that their manners were austere to excess, I see no one proof produced; and am disposed to believe from all I have read or know, that they were as remarkably amiable in their behaviour, as kind in their spirit, and compassionate towards the feeble-minded. Nor in a day of great dissipation and corruption of manners, which Mosheim every where confesses and laments, ought a peculiar carefulness to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, to be branded with so harsh an insinuation. As to their efforts to attain religious feelings and habits, the author has not perfectly understood the subject, if he supposes they meant to substitute religious feelings, in the place of practical godliness, which he allows them to have pursued; and, if he means to put a contempt on religious feelings, or habits, I own, I wonder how any man can be supposed to exercise divine love to God or man, to live in real habits of devotion, or to read and believe the great and precious promises of God's word, and not feel the out-flowings of desire, and the sensations of delight. A religion without feeling is certainly not the religion of the Psalmist, nor compatible with the graces of the spirit, described by St. Paul. But the private meetings, in which their devotional exercises were held, and the feelings of their hearts poured out in prayer and praise, were regarded as very enthusiastic, and reprobated by those, who not being at all inclined to join with them, were ready to justify their own superior excellence, by degrading their brethren with imputations of fanatic devotion, and unnecessary austerity.

Nothing can better express wherein this austerity consisted, than the very account Mosheim himself gives of the motives which influenced these good men, and the steps they took to revive the decaying interest of the true Lutheran religion. They imputed to the clergy the great cause of the declension evident. They supposed their manner of preaching unedifying their conduct not purely exemplary; and their negligence of their holy functions, as highly blameable. To this they attributed chiefly the over-flowings of ungodliness, the progress of vice, and the general carelessness about religious worship in the Church, in private families, and secret devotion. As they esteemed this the source of all the evils which they saw and lamented, it was natural for them to begin at the fountain head: and as this necessarily implied reflection on the pastors themselves, and on the universities which had sent them forth so ill qualified for their charge, both were highly exasperated against these reformers,

and set their faces against their schemes for amelioration. It is pleasing to trace the steps which they took, and the amendments they proposed, in their preparation of young men for the ministry, their enemies themselves being the reporters.

They laid down as a sacred axiom, that no man could have a *divine call* into the Church as a minister, unless his heart was filled with the love of Christ, and of the souls redeemed by his blood—he must be unexceptionable in holy conversation—and endued with a competent measure of literature, especially well versed in the holy Scriptures. They therefore banished the scholastic theology, which ministered only questions instead of godly edifying—they avoided dwelling strongly on the points in dispute between Christians; and discouraged all bitterness of controversy, though they neglected not to arm their pupils with divine truth. The Scriptures were the first object which they commended to their study and attention, making all philosophic pursuits, and ornamental literature a subordinate part of education. This was interpreted by their adversaries into a contempt for human learning, though confessedly none had a larger share of it than these worthy professors; and their pupils were no dishonour to them in this behalf; but because they treated as of less importance the defence of the outworks of Christianity, such as merely arguing on its evidence and reasonableness; and rather preferred an immediate attack on the conscience by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; the wise apologists and disputers of this world charged them with degrading the dignity of polemic theology, and giving the enemies of Christianity advantage.

In consequence of these views of the internal spirit of a minister of Christ, they insisted upon the necessity of a solemn dedication of himself to God; and that every clergyman ought to be an example and model of the doctrines which he taught, and the practices he recommended: affirming, to the great indignation of their brethren, that no man could be truly called to the ministry of the gospel, who was not in his own soul a sharer of the blessings of divine grace, and a pattern of his own precepts: a strictness to this, in the eyes of the laxer professors, which exposed the Pietists, to much censure, and involved them in many disputes, “whether a bad ecclesiastic could be a *true* “minister of the sanctuary,” and such like unprofitable questions. They recommended to their pupils to preach the simplicity which is in Christ, and not to be tied down to any phraseology that scholastic theology had sanctioned: but the most offensive part of their instructions to the young students for orders, was an abstinence from a variety of things, in which the professors of religion generally indulged themselves. Some of these, though in



their nature not absolutely sinful, they supposed to have a strong tendency to divert the mind from serious objects, and to corrupt the heart with inordinate love of pleasure. Others they reckoned in themselves immoral, as the stage, and such like entertainments; gaming of all kinds; books of a corrupting tendency, however humorous or well written; and sitting long at feasts, or wine, where, though not intemperate themselves, their presence might embolden others: nor did they reckon as innocent, but rather dangerous, and to be avoided, all promiscuous meetings of the sexes, for dancing and jollity of every kind; and even the sports of the field were prohibited to their pupils, as not seemly and of good report for ministers of the sanctuary. Many thought these restrictions unreasonable and severe, and that the clergy might well indulge themselves and countenance their people in what they were pleased to term, a little innocent pleasure. Disputes on these subjects arose; and, as is the case with disputes in general, they were carried on sometimes with too much asperity.

But nothing excited in the clergy and others, as has been hinted before, more general opposition than the societies, which the Pietists every where instituted for religious exercises; and into which they desired to admit none, whose exemplary conduct did not adorn their profession. This kind of separation from the world, and pious singularity, was peculiarly offensive.

That among the multitudes who were united with the Pietists in these societies, some betrayed intemperate zeal, and occasionally broached erroneous opinions, was to be expected and lamented. None, however, more sharply condemned all such things than the body of the Pietists themselves.

Two things, however, deserve to be particularly observed. First, that among the Lutherans an evident departure had begun from the life of godliness which animated the first reformers. Scientific pursuits were more in request than gospel purity; and, as is too observable, the decline of piety, and the progress of philosophy, are always accompanied with an equal proportion of infidelity, and caviling at the doctrines of revelation—a charge not peculiar to the Lutheran Church, but awfully applicable alike to the reformed, as we shall see, and, as has been noted, to the Romish communion. But infidel writings had not yet prevailed with the same open contempt, as at present, of the religion of their country; though, the philosophic tribe, with Leibnitz at their head, was paving the way: and Martin Seidel published his impious opinion of the person and office of Jesus Christ, which in the main, hath found since more strenuous defenders than he could muster in his own day.

But, Secondly. A more pleasing feature of the Lutheran

Church, appeared in the evident and wide-spread revival of godliness, which, however opposed by philosophers, disliked by the clergy, or ridiculed by the multitude, produced a host of confessors. That some really good men might have been prejudiced against the Pietists, may be admitted. They too hastily entertained the unfavourable reports of their maligners, and were led away by their misrepresentations; but among those who bore the name of Pietists, or were at least supposed to be pietistically inclined, the vitality of the spiritual Church of Christ was chiefly to be found. The lives and labours of these men would have been an ornament to whatever church they had belonged. I dwell with greater pleasure on these than on all the votaries of Aristotle, or the reformers of the philosophic school, the learned, and in their day, men of renown. I am neither in pursuit of the Stagyrice, nor his correctors, of the new philosophy nor of the old, of Theosophists, or metaphysicians, but of the true and faithful followers of the Son of God, in simplicity and godly sincerity.

The attempts of the Lutheran Church to send the light of divine truth into heathen lands, deserve an honourable memorial. The Danes have been particularly mindful to communicate to their colonies and settlements in Asia, Africa, and America, as well as Greenland, a knowledge of the salvation which is by Jesus Christ.

A zealous individual, the learned Heyling of Lubec, penetrated into Abyssinia in 1634 with this intention; and recommending himself to the Emperor's favour, rose to the highest office in the state. In returning to Europe for missionary assistance, he perished by the way: nor has it since appeared, that he left any abiding trace of successful labours behind him. The pious Duke of Saxe Gotha wished to renew the experiment, in the person of the Abbot Gregory, an Abyssinian, who had resided for a while in Europe. He was unfortunately shipwrecked on his voyage, and that good design failed, in 1597. Wansleb, who offered to supply his place, grievously disappointed the expectations of his noble patron, and proved himself unworthy of the office which he had undertaken: since that time nothing we believe hath been attempted in Abyssinia of a missionary nature. But in such a case surely we should never be weary in well-doing, or faint at our disappointments. The time shall come, when Ethiopia and Saba shall stretch out their hands unto God. In this noble contention of zeal, the Lutheran and reformed Church may strive without the breach of charity; and blessed are they who shall arise to devote themselves to this self-denying service, and become the honoured instruments in this glorious cause.



The reformed Churches continued rather on the increase, except in France. The loss of the Lutherans in Germany, by the defection of the Prince of Hesse and Elector of Brandenburg, was followed by the Duke of Holstein, and the Saxon Duke of Dessau, in 1688. And in Denmark, multitudes departed from the Lutheran tenets respecting the Eucharist, to the more rational and scriptural ones held by the reformed. But the great accession to the reformed Churches, was principally owing to the wide extended settlements of the English in North America, and their possessions in Jamaica, and the Leeward Islands; whither they carried their own profession of faith, and extended it among the Indian tribes, and the unhappy negroes, who, though too much neglected, were sometimes the objects of instruction in religious knowledge. We hardly mention the establishments in India and the East, which as yet formed inconsiderable factories; and where the attention to commerce left too little care about religion.

England itself, a chief member of the reformed Churches, happily, as has been mentioned, escaped the snares which popery had laid for her; and though with many blemishes, continued a glorious Church. Yet though enabled to struggle against her foreign adversaries, convulsions within, and that between brethren of the same faith, shook the foundations of Church and State to the centre.

James I. who ascended the throne after Elizabeth, with the cordial approbation of all parties, was unhappily a wavering, unsettled character. With the pride of a pedant, and the dupe of flattery, he entertained a high opinion of his own king-craft. Educated in the Kirk, he had professed the most unshaken attachment to the Scottish Church, and her presbytery, "as the purest Kirk under the sun:" but he had no sooner crossed the Tweed, and met the bowing bishops, and the magnificence of the English court, than he relished them far beyond the land of his nativity, and thought them more congenial to the high monarchical principles which he was disposed to entertain. The Puritans were sanguine in their expectation of favour and indulgence under a Scottish king, brought up among their brethren; but soon found themselves woefully mistaken; and James far preferred the pomp of cathedral worship to the simplicity of Geneva ceremonial. Yet as he loved to display his own theological knowledge, and gloried in his pacific principles, he held a grand conference at Hampton Court, with the professed intention of reconciling the difference between the Church and the Puritans; in which he affected to act the impartial umpire. But the impious battery of Whitgift gained him wholly. Won by the high flown compliments paid to his wisdom, his self-

conceit greedily swallowed what the courtly prelate exclaimed with rapture, "that the King spake by the special assistance of God's spirit." Whilst the hypocritical Bancroft, in the same strain of adulation, falling upon his knees before him, "protested his heart melted with joy, that Almighty God had given them such a King, as since Christ's time had not been." These incense bearing bishops beat the stiff Puritans hollow; who could offer no such adulation. Besides their proposals for church government, accorded not with his high prerogative principles, to which a hierarchy and lord bishops, his supporters, were much more agreeable. A few trifling alterations in the liturgy, left the Puritan party as discontented as ever. Respecting doctrine, no alteration had yet been whispered. The Bishops held the Calvinistic, and abhorred popery. The excellent Abbott who filled the see of Canterbury, and was firm in attachment to the ecclesiastical establishment, had been strongly fixed in Calvinistic principles. He was a man of uncommon piety and gentleness of spirit, an utter enemy to all constraint in matters of conscience; and willing to indulge his dissenting brethren, as many of the other bishops thought, to a fault. It was during his government of the church, that the famous synod of Dort was held, in 1618, of which I shall speak hereafter, and King James, always great in religious disputes, dispatched three divines of eminence to attend, as from the reformed Church of England, with their other brethren, to decide on the important controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians. The excellent and amiable Hall, afterwards bishop, of Norwich, was one of them.

Though James acceded to the condemnation of the Arminians, the articles of the Church of England being till then at least, held indisputably Calvinistic, yet his dislike to the Puritans, whom he permitted his bishops to prosecute, led him to a more ceremonious worship, and a fickleness in leaning to the doctrine which he had condemned: and records remain, which lead to just suspicion of his strong inclination to popery, as more conformable to the despotism he always affected and desired; and his rage to match Charles, the heir-apparent, with a popish princess, justly alarmed the jealousy of every true Protestant.

In his hatred of the Puritans; his thirst for despotic power, unfettered by parliaments; his partiality to Rome; and favour towards those who espoused the Arminian principles, and the pageantry of ceremonial worship, Charles I. exceeded his father; instigated and influenced by Laud, whom he had raised to the archbishopric of Canterbury: a prelate of the most insolent temper, and the most superstitious. Neither justice nor compassion stood in his way, when the Puritans were to be oppressed,



insulted and ruined. Many of them were driven from their native land, and fled to other countries of Europe and America, and more it was said were with Cromwell actually embarked, when an order compelled their stay, to submit to the severities that should be exercised upon them, in 1637.

Driven by all these ill-advisers on his ruin, Charles armed those with despair, who felt that resolute resistance only could break the yoke of bondage, ecclesiastical and civil, from their necks. I pretend not to vindicate or palliate the violences and crimes that followed, when the Puritans of different sects uniting under their leaders, first overturned the government, and then fell under the servitude of a Protector and a military rule, which they had unintentionally contributed to erect. Really good men are always the few in every denomination. And as their principles forbid them to seek this world as their kingdom, or to obtain power and influence by undue means, they are scarcely ever the persons who lead their party, but are compelled to swim with the stream, and of two evils to choose the least. Hence, in all revolutions, the power lodges in the hands of the ambitious, the violent, the crafty, and the men of least conscience, whatever piety may be pretended, when it can be made subservient to their purpose. And thus all parties in power have equally abused it; and the Puritans meanly as unchristianly retaliated upon the bishops and clergy, all the ill-usage and intolerance of which they had themselves so heavily complained. Indeed respecting real religion, Charles's character and conduct was little less equivocal than Cromwell's. And though in moral excellence the one will be allowed the better man, the other, whether fanatic or hypocrite, was certainly the abler politician, a firmer antagonist to the papacy, and a more strenuous supporter of the Protestant cause.

It was in the midst of these convulsions, that the Independents arose from very lowly beginnings, to the summit of influence: preferred by Cromwell to Presbyterians and Episcopalians; both of whom he more dreaded, as ready to erect a powerful government in the Church, inimical, to that which he wished to establish.

The Brownists were the original stock. From Leyden, Robinson, their teacher, re-imported the tenets of that sectary, with considerable improvements, and they spread with the greatest rapidity. In doctrine they were perfectly in accord with the reformed, and with the articles of the Church. In discipline, they maintained the independence of each congregation, as a complete Church in itself. They allowed not every man to minister on his own motion, but only such as were called by the Church, and who ought to be endued with competent

learning. They avowed submission to the civil powers, and that a kingly government, bounded by just and wholesome laws, is both allowed by God, and also a good accommodation unto men. But the truth seems to be, that though they could submit to this government, they preferred, and wished with the Anabaptists, and other sectaries, a republic, in preference to a monarchy; and, whilst it lasted, were its steadiest supporters. Many excellent men were of this denomination, eminent for knowledge and piety, among whom Dr. Owen holds a distinguished place. After the restoration they sunk very low. At the revolution they formed a union with the Presbyterians, but continued few comparatively, till of later years their congregations have greatly increased, from causes we shall detail hereafter.

In 1647, during the scenes of contention and turbulence, in which church government bore so great a part, various sects sprung up, many of whose names are only preserved as monuments of human folly. One only continuing to our days, deserves a more particular attention, the sect of the *Quakers*. Their apostle, George Fox, a shoemaker, supposing himself divinely inspired, rushed forth to proclaim war against all past and present modes of church government, as Babylonish inventions. The clergy, and all forms of religious worship, were particularly objects of his abhorrence. He and his followers often entered the churches, expressly to interrupt the public service, and revile the ministers. Women, as well as men, joined in these disorderly proceedings; and were often committed to prison by the magistrate, as disturbers of the peace; in which sufferings they gloried. Gentle and mild as the present race appears, the first founders of quakerism were violent, unruly, and headstrong; and exclusive of the matter which they pretended to teach, their manners were as highly exceptionable for their turbulence, as for the singularities they affected. When the first ebullition had exhibited the most blameable instances of fury, immodesty, and folly approaching to madness, the next generation softened down into simple manners, and a more rational procedure. During the protectorate they were the violent and avowed enemies of Cromwell, whose dread of them for a while, induced him by the rigorous arm of punishment, to endeavour to suppress their fanatic rage; but finding it in vain, he confined himself to diligence in watching their motions, and counteracting the mischief which he apprehended for them.

Under Charles II. the famous Robert Barclay drew up his apology, and endeavoured to render their theological system more plausible, and divested of all that the first more fanatical preachers had broached of error and absurdity. Still two things remained, which exposed them to the greatest trouble and vex-



ations. Holding the unlawfulness of oaths, they refused to swear allegiance to the government, and holding the unlawfulness of tythes, the law alone enforced the payment; a method, when constantly to be recurred to, as troublesome to the plaintiff, as it was vexatious and finally injurious to the defendant; who was compelled at last to pay, with costs of suit, often far exceeding the original demand.

James II. favoured them with all sectaries, insidiously hoping by this means to gain an easier toleration for his Catholic brethren. And he had an especial regard for their chief man, William Penn, the well known founder of the present flourishing State of Pennsylvania; whither he led a large body of his brethren to escape the vexations to which they were continually subjected at home.

William III. the great recoverer of British liberties, embraced them all in his generous toleration, and indulged them in their peculiarities. Since that time they have in general proved dutiful subjects, and contributed greatly to the prosperity of the commonwealth by their industry and frugality.

Their fundamental doctrine is derived from the mystic school, "That in every human being there is an eternal light, or Christ within, a portion of the same eternal reason that exists in God." On this leading principle all their system depends; which necessarily excluding the idea of the vicarious substitution of Christ, terminates ultimately and really in refined deism. This reason is the same in every man, Jews, Turks, and heathens; and requires only to be brought into exercise, in silence, meditation, and removal of the envelopements of carnal appetites, which obstruct its sublimation, in order to rise into perfection.

All being alike endued with this *inward light*, all have an equal right, whether men or women, to edify their brethren by its emanations, as they feel the motions of the internal word. Forms of devotion, hymns or sacraments, are therefore superfluous: even the Holy Scriptures themselves have no more authority than the discourses of those who have the same inspirer.

To procure the subdual of the animal man, that would bury the divine seed in darkness, the greatest abstemiousness in living is to be observed, and every indulgence avoided; not only amusements are to be renounced as criminal, but all show of politeness, or respect of persons, is absolutely to be abstained from. These form the most distinguishing peculiarity in Quaker manners.

But to return to the thread of the English church history. When after the turbulence of the civil war, on the death of Cromwell, Charles II. was restored, the former persecutions of the Puritans and Dissenters were renewed, as soon as Charles

was settled on the throne; and Episcopal government set up in Scotland as well as England; and by the act of uniformity, in 1662, all ministers were ejected from their cures, and prohibited from teaching, who objected to prelatical government, and to be re-ordained by bishops. After scenes of violence and oppression, on the one hand, and opposition, loud murmurs, and invectives on the other, some men of gentler tempers wished to soften down all the asperities of Christian brethren, and to induce them to a greater union, or tolerance, both in doctrine and discipline; that Episcopalians, with Presbyterians and Independents, the two great sects, might condescend, and then they would be more easily brought in. The pacificators, though attached to episcopacy, and the established worship, wished to concede its necessity as a divine institution, and essential to the being of the church, though contending for its antiquity; and as contributive to the *well-being* of the church. They would not therefore exclude from communion those who preferred other forms of government or worship, whether abroad or at home. And as to doctrines, they desired to reduce them to fewer heads, in which Calvinists and Arminians might meet, leaving the abstruser points of difference, as not essential to salvation, to be held by each without provoking contention, or exciting bitterness of spirit. These conciliatory divines were termed *Latitudinarians*, and though confessedly eminent for learning, and of blameless manners, drew upon themselves the bitter reproaches of the rigid on both sides, as men destitute of the real principles of religion, and fit for any change.

But these attempts proved abortive, and it was only on another revolution of government, that toleration delivered those from many penal laws, who objected to subscribe to the act of uniformity.

That a great decline in the life of true Christianity towards the end of this century was observable, is generally agreed. It had made rapid strides in the reign of Charles II. at whose accession, the profligate manners of the court encouraged every abomination. The rigid manners of the Puritans, with their starched persons, were held in aversion and turned into ridicule. Men easily and rapidly passed to the extremes of vice, to avoid the semblances of piety. And as a life of dissipation was in fashion, religion began to be a contemptible thing. Hence, since peculiar seriousness branded a man as puritanical, and effectually prevented all church advancement, the clergy took peculiar care to escape, as far as possible, from what must destroy their hopes of preferment, and not to be righteous over much, or sharp rebukers of courtly immoralities.

Theological subjects, also, began exceedingly to give place



to literature more polite, and knowledge more scientific. The candidates for the ministry, at the universities, were diverted by the classics, buried in mathematics, or bewildered in metaphysics; and the bible, if not among the proscribed books, was neglected grievously; and it would hardly have been a matter of good report in college, to have it said that a man read and studied the scriptures diligently except as a matter of science. Thus men made vast progress in all branches of human learning, whilst biblical studies, especially in any devotional way, were little attended to.

From the dregs of former sects, one is said to have left pernicious effects, and is branded with the name of Antinomian, carrying the reformed doctrines respecting the decrees, to an abuse before unknown; these pleaded, "because the elect must be saved, that all calls, admonitions, and exhortations were vain. That nothing was to be preached but the promises in Christ. And, as it was admitted, that the elect never fall finally from grace, they suggested, that a man might live in the grossest crimes and continue a believer; and, not being under the law, would not have sin imputed to him, being complete in Christ." The numbers, indeed, of those who professed these tenets, were very few, whilst too many, who still held the Calvinistic system, lived as if they believed them to be true.

But a far more pregnant cause of this declension than any other, arose from the new method of preaching, adopted by the latitudinarian divines above mentioned, who being chiefly Arminians in opinion, wished to avoid the peculiar and characteristic doctrines of Christianity, which had been so much dwelt upon formerly, and to confine their instructions to the beauty of virtue, and the force of moral obligation. Thus, without the great mainspring of Christianity, they laboured, in most admired compositions, to teach men to be virtuous till all power of godliness was lost; an awful demonstration was given, that when the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, is not taught and felt, all other endeavours to correct the morals of mankind will be impotent and vain.

By these men also, a singular schism was introduced into the church, towards the end of the century, when on the abdication of James II. and the accession of William III. a number of the episcopal bench, who were high in their notions of royal prerogative, as well as the divine right of episcopacy, and bound to the hereditary line of Stuart by principles of passive obedience and non-resistance, refused to acknowledge William III. as a lawful king. They were consequently deposed, and their sees filled by the most eminent of the latitudinarian doctors, Tillotson, Moore, Patrick Kidder, Fowler, and Cumberland; who

made no scruple of occupying the vacant bishoprics; and were esteemed by the high church party, who espoused the ejected bishops' cause, as robbers and intruders; and charged with the deadly crimes of rebellion against God and the King, and with schism of the church. Thus two parties arose, more peculiarly distinguished than before, of high churchmen, the excluded non-jurors and all those who approved their conduct and held the same opinions of monarchy and episcopacy: though to keep their preferments, they took the oaths, and submitted to King William. The other party more moderate, or low-churchmen, entertained more liberal opinions respecting the people's right, in certain cases, to choose their own governors, and the mitigated ecclesiastical authority, which claimed no dominion over the consciences of men, or privileges, but under acts of parliament.

To this day the name of parties subsist; the high-churchmen are reduced very low: and, indeed, if these new bishops, according to the high church principles, were intruders, rebellious and schismatical, and all their ordinations invalid, there is hardly an ecclesiastic in the land who does not derive his sacred character through them and their successors: and, therefore, according to high-church principles; their ministrations are null and void; but though the pride and intolerance of some who occupy these high places, are much the same as in their predecessors, and have procured them the character of high-churchmen; they choose not to admit the invalidity of the powers, which have advanced and consecrated them to their present eminence; content with the honor and emoluments, and not disposed to quit their stations, through any scruple about the legality of their appointment.

It is to be remarked, that however declining the state of religion at the end of the century appeared, never had England produced so many, or so able writers on sacred subjects of every kind, as the former part of it. Of these the works of many will live to edify the latest posterity; among them some of the English bishops maintain a high rank. The Puritan divines were remarkably laborious, and deep in biblical literature. But latterly a great change was perceivable. The men of the first and best generation were gathered to their fathers; another race of finer polish arose, less attached to the characteristic doctrines of Christianity. Ingenious defences of Christianity against infidels, and compositions of admired purity of the moral kind, were in the highest estimation. The great doctrines of the fall, and its consequences—the corruption of human nature—the redemption by atonement—the justification of a sinner by faith alone—and the necessity of the influences of the Holy Ghost to



produce all purity of heart and life—these, and the like topics, grew out of vogue, and gave place to the more philosophic system of moral suasion, metaphysical reasoning, and ethical essays on virtue, its beauty and obligations. Yet there remained some, many, faithful adherents to the Calvinistic doctrines of the articles; and even Bishop Burnet, not too much attached to them, owns, that however generally subscribed by Arminians for preferment, they were certainly inconsistent with their opinions; and that this subscription was a great violation of ingenuousness. Not that all religion rested with the Calvinists alone: that it chiefly did, may be concluded from the lives of the dissenters, who were certainly more strict in general, more pious and irreproachable, than their countrymen of the established church: and such was the change now wrought in sentiment, that if there were any in the church who preached the Calvinistic doctrine, and maintained a peculiar separation of themselves from the world, they were often branded as Presbyterians. Yet among those who held the Arminian principles and high-church ideas, there were men of uncommon excellence and piety, such as Bishop Kenn, and others, whose primitive manners truly adorned their christian profession. The regularity and decencies of worship were then also observed in many more families, and of the great and noble, than at present. These the laxity and growing dissipation of our day, have almost utterly discarded. We will not affirm, that there was in that age more true religion among the superior ranks of life, than in our day; though we believe there was; certainly, however, the forms and appearances of it were more respectfully maintained.\*

But there is one that seeth and judgeth. The Lord knoweth those that are his. We must leave the final decision to himself; and whilst we speak the painful result of our own convictions, we may still comfortably hope, where the blessed book of God was so generally diffused, and works of such excellent instruction multiplied, that many, very many, amidst the great prevalence of evil, and the unchristian conversation around them, held fast the faithful word, and lived in the practice, and died in the comfort of true Christianity.

Before the close of the former century, the reformation, after a sharp struggle, had been established in Scotland, and that kingdom had cast off the popish yoke. As is usually the case on such occasions, the very collision of the adverse parties had struck out sparks of burning zeal, on the one side to suppress, and on the other to spread, tenets rendered more dear and important by the very sufferings which they brought on the con-

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\* Hawic, who wrote A. D. 1800

fessors. Thus the sacred flame of truth had kindled in many a faithful bosom. Knox and his zealous associates had issued forth to preach the everlasting gospel, and rapidly spread the evangelical doctrines through the land. The Church government was as nearly as possible conformed to the Genevan model: and James F., who had been brought up in the Kirk, professed the most zealous attachment to it, as the purest church upon earth.

Many burning and shining lights, which the succinctness of this history will not allow me particularly to specify, illumined that northern region, in the long reign of this monarch. During his residence in Scotland, the bitter disputes about prelacy and presbyterianism, were rather compromised than conclusively settled. But, on the accession of the Scottish monarch to the English crown, they revived with all unchristian temper. Gained to that hierarchy, James cast his weight into the scale, to the great disgust of the majority of his northern subjects, and compelled them reluctantly to submit to an episcopal regimen: but the discontented increasing, and more violent measures being pursued by his unhappy son and the bishops who presided in the Scottish Church, a convulsion followed, which terminated in the overthrow of monarchy and episcopacy. By dire experience, the unhappy Charles the First now found that he had no refuge among subjects, whose affections he had alienated by supporting an ecclesiastical regimen, which they abhorred. The very army to whom he fled for protection, basely sold and delivered him up into the hands of his enemies; and left one more record of experience to princes, how dangerous it is to irritate men's minds, by pains and penalties for religious opinions.

Cromwell's dominion was as ill brooked by the Scottish nation, as that of Charles the First; but their impotent attempt to restore Charles the Second failed, and they experienced the rigor of the Protector's arm. That popish proselyte, who had readily been prevailed upon to play the hypocrite among the rigid Scotch Covenanters, had however received so much disgust from them, that he resolved, after the battle of Worcester, to return no more to Scotland, but await his fate, and seek concealment in England.

During the protectorate, Scotland enjoyed many and great blessings—the gospel was diligently preached, and the number of the faithful multiplied. The restoration brought back episcopacy and disgust to all the Presbyterian party. During this reign and the succeeding, Scotland was a perpetual scene of struggles, discontent, and irritating, instead of conciliatory measures. Many of the best men and ministers in the nation, were persecuted and driven from their country, by the strong



arm of ecclesiastical power, exerted rigorously to impose an establishment, to which the great body of the ministers and people were utterly averse. The Bishops sent into Scotland, with Archbishop Sharp at their head, served by their insolence and ill conduct to render the prejudices against episcopacy more inveterate. The peaceful and seraphic Leighton, after doing all the good, and preventing all the evil in his power, ashamed of his associates, and convinced of the improper steps taken to enforce an episcopal government, to which the body of the people was averse, resigned his archbishopric, and retired to a private station. His works will live a monument of evangelical piety; in which the distinguished purity of the style can only be exceeded by the excellence and energy of the sentiment. The brutal Archbishop Sharp, who had rejected every mild and conciliating step, suggested by his truly apostolical coadjutor, after having driven him by despair of serving the Church, from his see of Glasgow, fell the victim of his own violences, and died by the hands of assassins; detested even by those who most condemned the bloody deed. The revolution under William the Third, brought back to the Scots their favourite ecclesiastical government, and discipline, which hath been continued to the present period.

During all this century the Scots may be considered as a remarkably religious people. And though the life of real godliness can never be supposed universal in any nation, yet the number of evangelical and zealous ministers in the Kirk was great, and their faithful followers numerous. Remarkable instances of great revivals in religion in various places are on record. And though their solemn League and Covenant, and too many instances of undue heat and intolerance, will never meet approbation from the historian of candor and liberality; yet, with every thing that can be pointed out as censurable, no protestant church, in general, more eminently distinguished itself by purity of doctrine and holiness of conversation. Our limits restrain us from entering into minuter details.

It may be a matter of some doubt, whether the kingdom of Ireland can be reckoned among the Protestants or Catholics; for, though the government was in the hands of the former, the far greater part of the subjects continued in papal superstition and ignorance. Kept under by the strong arm of power, they waited the opportunity of emancipating themselves from this restraint, and restoring the dominancy of the popish religion. The rising discontents under Charles the First, afforded the moment of revolt, and the troops being employed in the fatal contest between the king and the parliament, the Irish rose with savage fury, and massacred seventy thousand Protestants in cold blood.

The irresistible arm of Cromwell reduced them to obedience, and punished them for their rebellion.

In the beginning of the century, some blessed laborers cultivated that vineyard. The names of Archbishop Usher, Bishop Babington, Downham and others, will ever be mentioned as the ornaments of that day, and of the Church which their labors edified. Nor, when the usurper seized the reins of government were the concerns of religion neglected, but a number of faithful and zealous ministers sought to extend the knowledge of the doctrines which are according to godliness among them. On the Restoration, the episcopal government was restored with the regal; but the court of Charles II. produced few such prelates as had blessed the land in the commencement of the century. The same fearful decay among the churchmen was to be observed in Ireland as in England; and the popish bigot, James II. wished to suspend all laws against those of his own faith, and to encourage the progress of his own religion. He found also among them his most strenuous supporters; and when unable in England to raise the least body of partisans openly to resist the authority of William the Third, Ireland invited him to struggle for his abdicated throne; and the English, under their glorious deliverer, were obliged to fight and conquer that rebellious country. But the true religion continued in a state of great decay—little was done effectually to diffuse the principles of protestantism. The Papists, far the superior number, though under many disabilities, adhered to Rome and her superstitions. Satisfied with all the civil and ecclesiastical emoluments, the nominal Protestants expressed very little zeal for the real conversion of their popish neighbors. In all that is worthy the name of religion, Ireland sunk very low; nor were there scarcely any partial revivals. A death-like stupor seems to have prevailed universally. Between Protestants and Papists a strong line was drawn; but as to the life of godliness the difference was very little.

Holland stands next among the reformed governments in eminence. Though religious toleration was no where more noble generous and extensive, the reformed religion was the only one established by the state, and that of far the greater body of the people. About the commencement of this century arose among them a sect, that hath received the name of Arminians, from its author, a divinity professor of Leyden; whose opinions produced the most unhappy dissensions, not only in the United Provinces, but throughout the Christian world. He had been educated at Geneva in the Calvinistic doctrines, but early in life began to be offended with the decrees as unconditional and absolute; and pleaded for what he judged the more rational



system of universal redemption. What he himself adopted, he publicly taught; and as those tenets militated so strongly against the religion of his country, he was soon branded with heretical pravity, and the sound divines of that communion, with Gomarus, his colleague, at their head, expressed their high disapprobation and censure. The controversy was sharply maintained, and many ecclesiastics of the Dutch Church, and others, in 1609, adopted the opinions of Arminius, who died in the midst of these contests: but he left able and resolute defenders, who carried on the war with redoubled vigour: among these were the famous Episcopius, Grotius, and Barneveldt. The Arminians claimed toleration; and a compromise was offered, provided they would renounce the principles of Socinianism, of which they were suspected, and to which it was supposed their tenets led. Repeated conferences, however, were ineffectual to restore the broken bonds of charity. The Calvinistic divines, contended that the Arminian principles tended to sap the vitals of Christianity, and to destroy all the most important peculiarities of the religion of God incarnate, and urged the magistrates to interpose their authority.

The peculiar sentiments of the Arminians, as contained in the writings of their leader and founder, turned on five points.

1st. That salvation was bestowed on the elect, on account of faith and perseverance foreseen: and damnation inflicted for unbelief and impenitence, foreseen also.

2d. That every individual is equally redeemed by Christ; though believers and good men only, finally receive the benefit.

3d. That true faith is only from the operation of the Holy Ghost, not from natural powers, or the self-wrought exertion of the human will; but that a general sufficiency of divine grace is given to all.

4th. That the divine grace, or power of the Holy Ghost, begins, and carries to perfection, all that is good in the creature; though the will of the impenitent does resist, and often renders the Spirit's operations ineffectual.

5th. That real saints may fall from a state of grace; but this was at first rather expressed dubiously; and, only afterwards asserted positively.

These are mentioned as the great points of difference from the Calvinistic divines: but it is said, that Episcopius, and the followers of Arminius, departed farther from them. The doctrines stated above, were the avowed pillars of the Arminian creed: but their ideas respecting all confessions of faith were very lax; and they maintained, that as Christians were only responsible to God for their religious opinions, no other confession of faith

was necessary, than the admission of the Scriptures to be the word of God.

Political differences in Holland ranged the different parties under opposite leaders. Maurice, Prince of Orange, and those who supported him, were opposed by Barneveldt, Grotius, and Hooggerbeets, men in the highest places of the republic, and jealous of Maurice, as aspiring after undue power and influence. Gomarus and his friends attached themselves to Maurice—the Arminians to Barneveldt and his associates. The party of Maurice prevailing, Barneveldt lost his head, and Grotius and Hooggerbeets were condemned to perpetual imprisonment. The Arminians, though not exposed to suffer for their opinions as yet, were thus deprived of their former protectors and supporters, and were probably regarded with an evil eye by Maurice and the prevailing party of the republic, for the intrigues in which they were known to have engaged in support of their patrons.

In 1618, a national synod was demanded by the Calvinists, to judge the points in dispute. The States General issued their edicts for its assembling: and deputies from all the provinces of Holland were joined by their brethren, and sent from the other eminent reformed churches of England, Switzerland, Hesse, Bremen, and the Palatinate, to decide the matters in controversy. Episcopius, a man of high abilities and eloquence, was the head of the Arminian party, and appeared foremost to defend their opinions against the accusations of Gomarus and his associates: but the synod had hardly commenced its deliberations, before a dispute on the mode of proceeding, drove the Arminian party from the assembly. The Arminians insisted upon beginning with a refutation of the Calvinistic doctrines, especially that of reprobation; whilst the synod determined, that as the remonstrants were accused of departing from the reformed faith, they ought first to justify themselves by scriptural proof of their own opinions.

All means to persuade the Arminians to submit to this procedure having failed, they were banished by the synod for their refusal; and retired with bitter abuse of the partiality with which they were treated. The synod, however, proceeded in their examination of the Arminian tenets; and as the Arminian doctors had left the assembly, their writings underwent a severe scrutiny in their absence: their opinions were condemned, and their persons excommunicated; whether justly or not, the reader will decide. But nothing can vindicate the rigor and asperity with which they were treated, and the unchristian persecution which followed, and drove these men from their country, into exile and poverty. Surely such are not the wea-



pons of a Christian's warfare. In the whole of this proceeding, ecclesiastical intolerance was made the instrument of political artifice, to crush the party of their adversaries. Whatever sanctity the one side or the other affected, they both proved themselves to be but men: and if the weak and oppressed were to be pitied, their perverseness, and the provocations they had given, left them equally inexcusable; as will appear evident to those who weigh impartially all the circumstances on both sides.

The neighbouring countries received the exiles with hospitality but some of the most illustrious, as Vorstius, and others, gave too much cause to their adversaries to justify their suspicions, by verging to the Socinian doctrines: whilst the differences among themselves, were nearly as great as with those from whom they had divided. Hardly any two of the Arminian chiefs explained their sentiments alike; some expressing in higher terms the doctrines of grace, and others sinking deep into the abyss of Pelagianism and Socinianism.

But the death of Maurice, their persecutor, opened a door for their return, under his less prejudiced successor; and they were admitted to free toleration and peaceable enjoyment of their opinions. And it is singular enough, that ever since, though the Dutch Church has maintained the profession of the reformed faith, the ministers and people have generally been verging to the Arminian doctrines. And though in Holland, the professedly Arminian congregations are by no means numerous, the clergy of the establishment are said generally to rank on the latitudinarian side: whilst from thence the spread of the Arminian tenets, through all the neighbouring nations, has been prodigious: the generality in all Protestant countries embrace them.

In their wide extended colonies, however, the established religion was still maintained; and Asia, Africa, and America, had received ministers of the reformed confession among them. But the state of spiritual matters was very low in all their settlements; as at home they had abundantly partaken of the general declension, having a name to live, yet being dead: though many and excellent men were found among them in the Church, and with the sectaries from it of various kinds: of these we mention the Mennonites, who, after all their persecutions, found rest and quiet at last. Their former turbulence, and their refusing to swear allegiance to any government, rendered them every where suspected, and in many places cruelly treated. But time, and their own exemplary conduct, having opened the eyes of the nations, a greater spirit of candor and tolerance having grown up, and governments becoming sensible of the value of

industrious subjects, whatever their faith might be, they were permitted to enjoy a common protection with the other sects, and sit under their vine and their fig-tree, and to be no more afraid. Their divisions among themselves, if not healed, were mitigated. The very rigid followers of Menon were few, the rest, except in the point of baptism, coincided nearly with the reformed. They admitted three orders in their church, bishops or presbyters, who preside, and have the power of administering baptism and the communion. Teachers set apart for preaching and public worship, and deacons or deaconesses. All matters pass in a consistory, at which the bishop or presbyter presides. They and the teachers are chosen by suffrage, and set apart by imposition of hands. The English Anabaptists herein considerably differ, as they have only one rank of ministers.

The Protestants in France from the time of Henry Fourth's exaltation to the throne, formed a kind of republic within the monarchy, by the privileges they had obtained; and the fortified places, as Rochelle, Sedan, and others, which were given them as securities for the uninterrupted enjoyment of their religious liberties. But treaties are feeble cords to bind the strong arm of power: and the violation of faith with heretics is sanctioned by the Catholic's creed. The Protestant leaders were too often ambitious men, and the enemies of the Hugonots always watched for an occasion to deprive them of those privileges which necessity only had extorted; nor was that occasion long wanting. Cardinal Richelieu, who perceived that his master was but the lord of half his kingdom, whilst the Protestants held Rochelle, and could always call their brethren to their assistance, after hard struggles to subdue their independent spirit, besieged and took their capital in 1628, which a variety of misfortunes prevented the succors promised by England, from relieving. Lying now wholly at the will of their enemies, whose tender mercies they had so often experienced to be cruel, the Protestants in France sunk very low under every oppression, and every violation of privileges, which they had no longer power to maintain. The insidious cardinal, and the imperious monarch, united with the Jesuits for their extirpation; too intolerant to permit the Protestant profession under his dominion. Every artifice and promise, joined with threats, and sufferings of various kinds, were first used to engage them to apostatize from the faith of their forefathers, which indeed too many did. And on those who were obstinate in adhering to the Protestant religion, vengeance fell, and booted apostles dragooned them into compliance, or delivered them up to the bishops and clergy, who persecuted them with the most inveterate hatred and unrelen-



ting cruelty. Multitudes fled their country, and sought an asylum in foreign lands; and others unable or unwilling to fly, endured all that malice could devise, and abused power inflict, to subdue them to the yoke, to break their spirit, or consume them by suffering.

The edict of Nantz was now revoked: and that wicked and bigotted Lewis the Fourteenth, instigated by his Jesuits and clergy, merited virtue enough to cancel all his crimes, and procure the high approbation of the Roman see, by the murder and plunder of thousands of his Protestant subjects, and compelling the rest to seek exile as a refuge. To add insult to cruelty, an edict commanded them without delay to return to the bosom of the Church, whilst guards were stationed on the frontiers, to prevent the escape of those, who for conscience sake were willing to leave all behind them. Yet hundreds of thousands, by one means or other, found their way into the neighbouring nations, where they were received with friendship and affection, as exiles, as persecuted brethren. They left their ungrateful country, weakened by such immense emigrations, and carried their industry and resentment to strengthen the hands of her enemies. Even many of the Catholics condemned so gross a violation of the most solemn engagements; and all but the miserable bigots themselves, considered the step impolitic, as unjust. It must be confessed the Protestants deserved the scourge, by the awful declensions evident among them. Some of their principal teachers had departed grievously from the reformed doctrines; and wished to bend to a nearer state of union with the idolatrous church, which they had renounced.

The spirit of truth and godliness was not likely to flourish under such circumstances. The cause of the protestants in France was reduced very low: and those who remained, instead of brightening in the furnace of affliction, degenerated from the purity of the faith as well as the spirituality of practice. The remaining Protestantism was little more than an inveterate hatred of popery. Some gracious ministers remained, but few, and driven into corners; and though a remnant of the truly faithful was yet to be found, the days of youth were past, and grey hairs were upon them. They have lingered on declining to our days; whether times of refreshing shall again come to them from the presence of the Lord is in the womb of time, but not out of the prospect of hope.

The poor Waldenses, still maintaining in their sequestered vallies the protestant doctrine, were hunted out by jesuitical malice, and cruelly treated by their popish duke of Savoy; their

utter extinction was threatened. The kind interposition of the English, Dutch, and Swiss governments preserved a few. Scattered and peeled, reduced in numbers, and destitute of pastors, without some gracious revival, they seemed approaching their final dissolution.

As reduced nearly was the once flourishing church of the Palatinate. Under a Catholic elector, and a series of oppressions, it hardly maintained a name among the nations where it had been first in honour. Nor were the other reformed communities exempt from the general declension. Hesse and the rest of the Calvinistic churches in Germany, exhibited no specimens of such life and activity as evidenced a vigorous frame: settling like their neighbours, into deadness of profession and formality of devotion.

Upon the whole, we may with grief lament the decay visible among all the reformed churches towards the expiration of the century. Great inroads made on the purity of the faith; a great neglect of all holy ordinances; a grievous departure from the spirituality of a heavenly walk; and an almost utter extinction of zeal for promoting the salvation of men's souls; the ministry less evangelical, and the people lukewarm. We may add also a spirit of infidel philosophy arose, that tended to sap the vitals of revealed truth; whilst the growing immorality and dissipation, produced a contempt of all strictness of religious profession, and stood ready to welcome the spreading poison of atheism, in order to remove the apprehensions of future responsibility. We wish we may be mistaken in our gloomy views of the period we are describing; and that thousands may have been found left in our Israel, unnoticed and unknown, who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

There were still vast nations bearing the Christian name, chiefly under governors of the Romish pale, where a great mixture of protestants and others were to be found, that classed neither with Lutheran nor the reformed. Of these, the Socinians were at the beginning of this century, a considerable body in Poland and Transylvania: and from thence as their head quarters, dispatched missionaries to the other parts of Europe; but they proceeded in a line different from other protestants; not affecting to lead the multitude by popular discourses, but to gain the great and literati by professing themselves the advocates for the noble powers of reason; calling it the all-sufficient guide to truth; and its uncontrolled exercise, the dignity of human nature. Revelation itself before this becomes superfluous; and natural religion fully adequate to every purpose of salvation.



But the hopes entertained from these ingenious missionaries, answered not the sanguine expectations of their fellows. A momentary prospect of success at Altorf, vanished, and Sohner and his pupils were expelled. Nor did other places furnish a more promising harvest. Even their university at Racow was dissolved and dispersed by the diet of Poland, for an insult offered by some of the wild students to a crucifix; which so roused the wrath of the Catholics, that the Socinians were in consequence banished from the kingdom. This edict was executed with the most unchristian severity.

Dispersed and exiles, they fled into different countries, and after various efforts to obtain an establishment, were viewed by too suspicious an eye to gain any settled resting place. The denial of Christ's divinity was then regarded as a crime so blasphemous, as no Christian state should tolerate: milder maxims have since prevailed: intolerance becomes not the advocates for truth and meekness.

But few communities of Socinians are known out of England, the collusives of all sects and heresies. Here Biddle had a congregation under Cromwell, and Charles II. Nor hath there been wanting a succession of those who have maintained the leading features of the Socinian heresy, though not exactly agreed, respecting the person of the Son of God. But all concur in rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, denying the godhead of Christ, and renouncing all vicarious satisfaction from the sufferings of a Redeemer.

The Arians and Semi-arians were indeed more rife than the grosser but simpler Socinians; and many having degrading opinions of Christ, rejected the Athanasian doctrine, and formed to themselves different modifications of deity subordinate. A system which, however much it prevailed, seems more irrational than the Unitarian or Socinian. Can we conceive any intermediate step between the true God and no God?

The Collegiants of the United Provinces appear to be a branch of Socinianism, as their wide extended communion admits all who acknowledge the divinity of the scriptures, and are not grossly immoral. And every man is permitted to speak in their assembly, and even oppose and argue, provided it be done with gentleness. As they have neither creeds nor consecrated teachers, their bond of union alone is voluntary association.

Madame Shurman, and the famed Bourignon, might be mentioned, ladies whose zeal and learning gave them importance; and their aspiration after perfection flattered spiritual pride and selfrighteousness. The leading tenet of the latter, better unfolded by Poiret, a disciple, and man of genius, is, that all true

Christianity consists "in immediate communion with the Deity, by internal feeling and impulse;" approaching very nearly in its genius to the doctrine of Quakerism, and alike sprung from the same mystic stock: of which also in England, was the noted Joanna Lead, whose visions and predictions in that day, collected a number of absurd and credulous disciples. Folly and credulity will never cease in every age to afford abundant converts to fanaticism, and to whatever comes with the stamp of extraordinary.



## CHAPTER XIX.

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### EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

EXTERNAL CHURCH—REVIVAL OF RELIGION--DIFFERENT SECTARIES—LEARNING AND LEARNED MEN.

DURING the course of the Eighteenth century, the spirit of toleration prevailed to a considerable extent, and the flames of persecution were measurably extinguished. The great ones of the earth were too much engaged in temporal affairs to devote their time to the concerns of religion, and in many instances people were permitted to enjoy the liberty of thinking and acting for themselves. This age had, nevertheless, its persecutions, and has also been distinguished by some events of importance to the Christian church.

In the year 1700, Clement XI. succeeded to the papal throne, and is chiefly remarkable for having published the famous bull, which from its initial letters is entitled *Unigenitus*. It was issued in opposition to the Jansenists, and defines and settles the articles of the Romish faith. He was succeeded by Innocent XIII. Benedict XIII. who succeeded Innocent, was a man of eminent piety and virtue. For the purpose of reforming the errors of the church, he assembled the famous council which met in the palace of the Lateran in 1725, the acts and decrees of which were made public, but have proved utterly ineffectual to the ends which were proposed from them.

This pontiff was succeeded by Clement XII. and Benedict XIV. the latter of whom was a man of learning as well as piety. When he was cardinal, he published a treatise on the Canonization of Saints, with some other works. Clement XIII. who acceded to the pontificate on the 6th of July 1758, was a man of a very different character. He was a bigot to every petty ceremony; and indeed the celebrated Ganganelli seems to have perfectly characterized his two predecessors in a few words; when the said Benedict had written, and Clement had prayed much. The haughtiness of the Venetian character displayed itself in Clement, in the dispute in which he involved himself

on account of the Jesuits with all the branches of the house of Bourbon, who threatened to withdraw their dominions from the spiritual jurisdiction of Rome. He left the papal dignity in a critical situation, from which all the prudence and moderation of his successor could scarcely emancipate it.

Laurenzo Ganganelli, the son of a physician at St. Archangelo, and the only regular in the sacred college at the time of his election (being of the order of minor conventuals,) was chosen on the 19th of May, 1769, and assumed the title of Clement XIV. After completing his studies, Ganganelli had obtained the regency of his college, and was afterwards promoted to the office of consultor to the holy office. This employment, which included that of the Pope's minister in all inquisitorial concerns, introduced him to considerable notice; and in a contest between the cardinals, Torrigiani and Carlo Rezzonico to fill a vacancy in the cardinalate for their respective friends, the pusillanimous pope terminated the struggle by advancing to the cardinal's hat father Ganganelli, in preference to either of the candidates already recommended. These progressive steps of his advancement were, as he professed himself, unexpected, and unsought for; yet Ganganelli has been charged with having always extended his views, and with having adopted a regular system of conduct for obtaining the papacy, from the time that he became one of that body from which are selected the sovereigns of Rome.

The ruin of the Jesuits was at this period resolved upon in Portugal, and the manœuvres of Pombal had extended the designs against this body into almost every court in Europe, and particularly Spain. By his artifices, Ganganelli obtained the friendship and confidence of Don Emanuel de Rada, the Spanish minister at the court of Rome. He obtained also the intimacy of the Portuguese and French ministers; and, in contradiction to the practice of the cardinals, who, on account of the pretensions of the papacy, to the duchies of Parma and Placenza always avoid addressing the duke of Parma on any occasion which must oblige them to consider him as the lawful possessor of those territories, Ganganelli seized every occasion of congratulation or condolance to write to the duke. An occurrence which took place in the management of the corn soon afforded Ganganelli an opportunity of acquiring great popularity amongst every rank. By the devices of Torrigiani, the secretary of state, an artificial famine was raised in Rome and the adjacent country: great numbers perished miserably, and many of those who survived flocked to Rome, in order, by processions and supplications, to avert their calamities and obtain some redress. In this extremity, commissioners were dispatched to procure corn at



four times the price at which it had been exported: much of the concealed grain appeared by degrees, but so much injured, that it produced very alarming diseases amongst the people; a great mortality ensued, and a plague was apprehended. Inadequate as this relief was, it must be paid for, and there was no money in the treasury. It was determined to have recourse to five millions of money, which Sixtus V. had deposited in the castle of St. Angelo, with the express provision that it must only be employed in cases of extreme urgency, and not without the consent of the consistory of cardinals. Ganganelli boldly opposed the squandering of that treasure, which was left for the benefit of the state, and must be refunded by a tax upon the people, who were already nearly exhausted. He noticed the atrocity by which so dreadful a calamity had been produced, and insisted upon an investigation of the business, the restitution of the money which had been so scandalously acquired, and the punishment of the criminals. If this was the dictate of public spirit, Ganganelli was disappointed: the money was applied to pay for the wickedness of the monopolizers; but the cardinal became the darling of the people, who anxiously desired his succession to the papal throne.

The resistance of Ganganelli on this occasion to the views of the consistory, has by his enemies been ascribed to his desire of appearing in opposition to the pope, and by this means indirectly obtaining the patronage of the forcing courts,\* to whom the indecision of the reigning pontiff concerning the suppression of the Jesuits had been very offensive.

On the decease of Clement XIII. the interest of these courts was united in favour of Ganganelli, who however deferred for some time to gratify the general expectation of the abolition of the Jesuits. His popularity was preserved by his diminishing several taxes which were very oppressive to the poor, and the Clementine Museum was enriched by his liberality and taste. Whether the humility professed by the pontiff may be depended upon or not, thus much is certain, that no man, after the attainment of dignity, ever lived more agreeably to such a profession. He was modest and unaffected. When he first removed to the Vatican, he found his chamber hung with crimson damask, which he immediately ordered to be removed, and observed, that bare walls were sufficient for a plain monk. He was temperate in an extreme, and performed every office about his own person as long as he was able, because he conceived he had no right to

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\*The courts of Spain, Portugal, and Naples have been thus termed from their always taking an active part in the election of the pope. There is another party on this occasion denominated the Roman party, to which has sometimes been termed *il partito Polacco*, the flying party.

incommode even his attendants. Whatever savings accrued from the frugal regulations which he adopted in his domestic economy he put to the best of uses, by distributing them to the necessitous poor, in the relieving of whom he indulged himself as a favourite amusement. By his wisdom and address he reconciled offended monarchs, and made several regulations in the monastic orders much to the advantage of religion and virtue.

The court of Portugal and the house of Bourbon were however not at all disposed to relinquish their favourite project, and Clement was at length obliged to prepare a brief for the suppression of the Jesuits. This was accordingly dispatched to the court of Spain; whence, after going through a revision and several alterations, it was sent back to Rome, and put in execution. From this period was dated the disorder which carried Ganganelli to the tomb. From this period he was reported to have been the victim of imaginary apprehensions, and the prey of distrust. The poison to which his death was ascribed by some, was by others believed to have had no existence but in his own imagination. He was however haunted by the idea: he procured counterpoisons to be ready in case of emergency; and conceiving that extreme perspiration was conducive to counteracting the dreaded mischief, he sat during the excessive warmth of July and August in a chamber heated by a brazier; and his sweats were so profuse, as to oblige him daily to change his linen several times. To these causes, rather than to the operation of slow poison, were ascribed the gradual waste of his body, and the deprivation of the use of his limbs. They were indeed the harbingers of death; but according to the testimony of his own physician, and the physician to the conclave, Ganganelli destroyed his life by his extreme care of its preservation. It was to the honour of this pontiff, that his views were never directed to the enriching of his own family and that at his death 12,000 crowns were the whole of his personal possessions.

Ganganelli was succeeded on the 15th of February, 1775, by Pius VI. who was generally esteemed as a pontiff of elegant manners, and of a respectable character. His abilities, though not splendid, were useful. He was strongly attached to the Romish faith, and took a peculial pleasure in performing the various offices and ceremonies of religion. Some dissensions arose between this pontiff and the king of the two Sicilies, with respect to the rights of patronage, which had not apparently been accurately defined in that kingdom: the dispute, however, was at last adjusted.

One event, of considerable importance to the church, which



occurred in this century, was the abolition of the order of Jesuits. The first effectual step towards their suppression, was taken by the court of Portugal; but their misfortunes indubitably originated in their own wicked policy and misconduct.

The active genius of this order, which penetrated the remotest countries of Asia, at a very early period of the preceding century directed their attention to the extensive continent of America, as a proper object of their missions. Conducted by their leader, St. Francis Xavier, they formed a considerable settlement in the province of Paraguay, and made a rapid progress in instructing the Indians in arts, religion, and the more simple manufactures, and accustoming them to the blessings of security and order. A few Jesuits presided over many thousand Indians: they soon, however, altered their views, and directed them altogether to the increase of the opulence and power of their order. Immense quantities of gold were annually transmitted to Europe; and in the design of securing to themselves an independent empire in these regions, they industriously cut off all communication with both the Spaniards and Portuguese in the adjacent provinces, and inspired the Indians with the most determined detestation to those nations. Such was the state of affairs when, in the year 1750, a treaty was concluded between the courts of Lisbon and Madrid, which ascertained the limits of their respective dominions in South America. Such a treaty was death to the projects of the Jesuits, and the consequence was a violent contest between the united forces of the two European powers, and the Indians of Paraguay incited by the Jesuits. The crafty and vindictive marquis of Pombal, who had raised himself from performing the duties of a common soldier, in the character of a cadet, to be absolute minister of the kingdom of Portugal, could not easily forgive this refractory conduct; and perhaps he might apprehend the downfall of his own authority, unless some decisive check were given to the growing influence of this dangerous society.—Whether there was a foundation or not for the report of the conspiracy against the life of the king, or whether the discontented Jesuits were really concerned with the unfortunate nobleman who suffered on that account, is difficult to determine. It was sufficient that it afforded a specious pretence for this expert but unprincipled statesman to rid himself of enemies, whom he could not regard in any other than a formidable light. In the beginning of the year 1759, therefore, the Jesuits of all descriptions were banished from the kingdom of Portugal, on the plea that certain of their order were concerned in the attempt upon the life of the king in September 1758, and their effects were confiscated. The hostilities which commenced, not long after, between Por-

tugal and Spain, served a little to protract the existence of the Jesuits in the latter kingdom: the jealousy however which their conduct had excited in the court of Madrid lay dormant only for a while, and, when a fit opportunity presented, no nation of Europe was more clamorous for their abolition.

The disgrace of the Jesuits in France proceeded from different and more remote causes. Among the opposers of Jansenism, none distinguished themselves equally with the Jesuits. By their influence the bull *Unigenitus*, which condemned so strongly the principles of the Jansenists, was generally supposed to have been obtained. The bull was opposed by the parliament and archbishop of Paris, by fifteen other prelates, and by many of the most respectable among the inferior clergy, as as an infringement on the rights of the Gallician church: the weak and unprincipled Lewis XIV. was however entirely under the government of the Jesuits, and enforced the acceptance of the bull throughout the whole kingdom.

To the year 1750, the bull, though generally disliked, occasioned no public disturbance. At that period, the refusal of the sacrament to the Jansenists served to rekindle the dormant flame. This unlawful usurpation was warmly opposed by the different parliaments, which ended in the banishment of the members by Lewis XV. the reigning sovereign. After various intrigues, in consequence of which the parliament of Paris was twice banished, and twice recalled, some other events occurred which accelerated the downfall of the order of Jesus.

As the constitution of the society did not prevent the order from engaging deeply in temporal concerns, no opportunity of enriching their treasury was permitted to escape them. They engaged largely in trade, particularly with the island of Martinico; but certain losses falling heavily upon them, the Jesuit who was the ostensible person in the transactions, *affected* to become a bankrupt, and to shift the payment of the debts he had incurred from the collective body. As a monk, it was evident he could possess no distinct property, and he had been always considered in the light of an agent for the society. The affair was therefore litigated before the parliament of Paris, who were not over favourably disposed to these *holy* fathers. In the course of the proceedings, it was necessary to produce the institutes or rules of their order, when it was found to contain dangerous maxims, subversive equally of morals and of government; and other political motives concurring at the same time, the order was abolished in France by a royal edict, in the year 1762, and their colleges and possessions alienated and sold.

The bigotry of Clement XIII. long withstood the solicitations of these united Catholic powers; but the sagacious Ganganelli,



whose views were more extensive, and whose religious sentiments were more moderate, made a proper sacrifice of the society to political wisdom and the spirit of the times, and on the 21st of July, 1773, signed a brief for their final suppression. The ten houses and colleges possessed by the order in Rome were seized upon at the same instant. The brief of suppression was read in each society, the general was conveyed to the English college, and confined to a small gallery at the top of the building, where his examination commenced, and with that of several others of the fraternity was completed at the castle of St. Angelo, in which place the general was afterwards confined.

Another event which occurred, has exerted a great influence upon the religious as well as the political world: viz. the American Revolution, which terminated in the separation of the United States from the British government, the formation of a Federal Republic, and the establishment of a most extensive plan of religious toleration. The constitution of the United States provides for no national establishment of religion, gives no one denomination of Christians a preference over others, but secures the rights of conscience more fully and indiscriminately to all, than any other government upon earth. And when we consider the advantages of this republic, in reference to soil, climate, and extent of territory, taking into view at the same time the mildness, and we trust, permanency of the government, we cannot but indulge the hope that Heaven has designed it as an asylum for civil and religious freedom; where millions of true worshippers shall live in the exercise of vital holiness, worshipping God according to the dictates of their consciences, when the Kingdom of the Messiah shall speedily triumph over all opposition.

The American Revolution was followed by one in France, the effects of which were far from being favourable to civil or religious liberty. Of the state of religion in France subsequent to the Revolution, little can be said. The Romish church was re-established, Infidelity had many advocates, and Protestants made but feeble efforts.

The influence of French Infidelity was manifest in England and other parts of Europe, and even in America. The superstition, intolerance, and profligacy of the Romish church, were considered as forming a proper foundation on which to build arguments against Christianity; and as the licentious are always ready to seize upon any pretext for evading the restraints of religion, the new philosophy, as it was sometimes called, was embraced by multitudes. Its effects, however, were gradually developed, and many of its deluded votaries learned, too late,

that they were to look for the precepts and examples of true religion, not in the errors and profligacy of a fallen corrupted church, guilty of the blackest enormities under the name of Christianity, but the Holy Scriptures, and in the lives of those who have faithfully kept them.

This century has been distinguished likewise by an extensive revival of religion, which commenced under the labours of Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, and Mr. George Whitefield, and spread through different parts of Great Britain, in the United States, also in West Indies, and some other places. Notwithstanding the efforts of modern Infidelity, the great licentiousness of the times, and the supineness that had spread among the professors of religion, the gospel was made effectual, and the mighty power of redeeming grace was displayed in turning many thousands from darkness to the light of life. As is usual in times of reformation, this work was attended with opposition and considerable persecution; but the fruits of it are still visible, and its effects are likely to be of long continuance. In considering the sects which have appeared in the eighteenth century, we shall have occasion to speak more fully on this subject.

As no important alterations in the established churches appear to have taken place in the course of this century, we shall here give some account of the principal denominations which have arisen within this period, and speak of their distinguishing principles.

The first denomination we shall notice is that of the Moravians, established by Nicholas Lewis, Count of Zinzendorf. This nobleman settled, in 1721, at Bartholdorf in Upper Lusatia, and soon afterwards commenced teaching some Moravian families, of whom he made proselytes, and engaged them to leave their places of residence and settle in his neighbourhood. They built a house in the forest which was adjoining to the village of Bartholdorf, where in 1722 they had their first meeting. The society increased so rapidly, that in a few years they were possessed of an orphan-house and other public buildings; and they gave their habitation the name of Ahernhuth, from which they have been sometimes called Herenhutters. The society themselves, however, date their existence from a much earlier period; and assert that they are descended from the Moravian and Bohemian brethren, who existed as a distinct sect many years prior to the Reformation. They are a sober, inoffensive, and pious people; are considerably numerous in some parts of Germany and America, but have not increased much in other places excepting those in which they have missions. This people like many others has been misrepresented, and things laid to their



charge of which they never were guilty. It is admitted that some of their converts having previously imbibed extravagant notions, propagated them with great zeal in a phraseology very reprehensible; and that count Zinzendorf himself sometimes adopted the very improper language of those fanatics, whom he wished to reclaim from their errors to the soberness of truth. Much of the extravagance which has been attributed to the count, ought not to be charged to him, but to those persons, who, writing his extemporaneous discourses in short hand, printed and published them without his knowledge or consent. This eminent benefactor to the United Brethren, died 1760, and it is with reason that they honour his memory, as having been the instrument by which God restored and built up their church. But they do not regard him as their head, nor take his writings as the standard of their doctrines, which they profess to derive from the word of God. Their church government is of the episcopal form, but they allow no pre-eminence to their bishops; their church having from its first establishment been governed by synods, consisting of deputies from all the congregations, and by other bodies which are called conferences.

The principal doctrines which distinguished the Moravians are contained in the following articles of faith. 1. That creation and sanctification ought not to be ascribed to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but belong principally to the Saviour: and to avoid idolatry, people ought to be abstracted from the Father and Holy Ghost, and the first directed singly to Jesus, who is the appointed channel of the Deity. 2. That Christ has not conquered as God, but as man, with precisely the same power as we have to that purpose. 3. That the law ought not to be preached under the gospel dispensation. 4. That the children of God have not to combat with their own sins, but with the kingdom of corruption in the world.

The Moravians assert, that faith consists in a joyful persuasion of our interest in Christ, and our title to his purchased salvation. They deny the doctrines of particular redemption and final perseverance. They have established among themselves a discipline which closely unites them together, preserves great regularity, keeps them entirely dependent on their superiors, confines them to certain exercises of devotion, and to the observance of different rules. The church at Herenhuth is so divided, that first the husbands, then the wives, then the widows, then the maids, then the young men, then the boys, then the girls, and lastly the little children, are in so many distinct classes; each of which is daily visited, the married men by a married man, the wives by a wife, and so of the rest. Each class has its director chosen by its members, and frequent meetings

are held in each class, and general ones by the whole society. The members of each class are subdivided into smaller bodies, and proper assistance is given to each of these subdivisions; but more particular care is taken of such as are believed to be spiritually dead. The elders superintend all these classes. A great part of their worship consists in singing; and their songs are always a connected repetition of the things which have been preached before. At all hours, whether day or night, some persons of both sexes are appointed by rotation to pray for the society. Among other means for preserving among them the spirit and power of godliness, they celebrate love-feasts.

In questions of importance, or of which the consequences cannot be foreseen, they do not trust the judgment of a majority of votes, nor even to the unanimous agreement of all who may be present; but in such cases recourse is had to the *lot*. For adopting this mode of deciding ecclesiastical affairs, they allege as reasons the practices of the ancient Jews and Apostles; the insufficiency of human understanding, amidst the best and purest intentions, to decide for itself in what concerns the administration of Christ's kingdom; and their firm reliance on the promises that the Lord will approve himself the head and ruler of his church. The *lot* is never used but after mature deliberation and fervent prayer; nor is any thing submitted to its decision which does not, after being thoroughly weighed, appear to the assembly eligible in itself.

In missionary labours, the Moravians have done, in proportion to their numbers, more than any other denomination, especially in reference to foreign missions. When any among them are disposed to serve God among the heathen, they communicate their wishes and views to the committee appointed by the synods of the brethren to superintend the mission. If, on particular enquiry into their circumstances and connexions, no objection is found, they are considered as candidates. As to mental qualifications, much erudition is not required. To be well versed in the sacred scriptures, and to have an experienced knowledge of the truths they contain, are qualifications which are judged indispensably necessary.—In our account of missions in the concluding part of this work, we shall have occasion to speak again concerning the labours of this people, so distinguished in evangelizing the heathen.

The Methodists had their origin in the University of Oxford in England, and were, at the time of their first establishment all members of that institution. As the rise of this denomination has been attended with an extraordinary revival of religion in Great Britain and the United States, we shall give a more extended and particular account of it.



During many years after the dawn of the Reformation, religion and religious principles had spread with rapidity and with great success. Every part of Europe had felt the force of truth, and the gospel, taking the wings of the morning, was beginning to spread into different parts of the world.

But these day's of Zion's prosperity were followed by a decline of genuine piety. In Great Britain, though the forms of religion were strenuously supported, the power of it was little known, and both the clergy and laity were shamefully ignorant of Christian experience. The rising prosperity of the nation, with increasing wealth and commerce, tended to increase the corruption of the kingdom; and morals, though rigidly inculcated, were but little regarded. Between contests for power, thirst for riches, and love of pleasure, the nation gradually sunk into corruption, and the established church presented but a feeble barrier against the abounding wickedness of the day.

It was in this state of torpor and departure from truth and godliness, that at Oxford, one of the universities, a few, chiefly young men, began to feel the deplorable spiritual ignorance and corruption around them. They were conscious that something ought to be done to revive a sense of religion in principle and practice, from the decay into which it was fallen: they were convinced men of God and ministers of the sanctuary, ought to lead very different lives from any thing they observed at college.

John and Charles Wesley, the first and most distinguished leaders in this revival of evangelical truth, were brothers: one fellow of Lincoln College, and the other student of Christ Church. Their father a respectable clergyman at Epworth, in Lincolnshire was of the high church party and had educated his sons in his own principles. John, the eldest, took the lead, and at first appeared vastly disposed to inculcate every rigorous mortification, far beyond the practices of that day, and some times approaching the penances of popery.

With these, associated a number of other students, whose minds were similarly affected. Mr. Ingham, Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Harvey were afterwards, particularly distinguished. They all entered into solemn engagements with each other, to lead a stricter life of holiness and self denial than they had ever yet done, and to separate from every thing unbecoming their characters as christians or ministers. They agreed to meet frequently together at each other's rooms for prayer and reading, the scripture; to keep stated times of fasting, and to receive the communion every Lord's day: they visited the prisons and the sick; they sought out and relieved distressed objects; and by these and other peculiarities, attended by an uncommonly

sanctimonious deportment, they rendered themselves very notorious in the university, and acquired the name of *Methodists*.

As they all set out with profession of strict adherence to the Church of England, the distinguishing tenets of her articles and homilies were particularly enforced by them; and as this was utterly unlike the manner of preaching, which then chiefly obtained, they attracted very numerous audiences; and their lively manner of address, as well as the matter of their discourses, exceedingly struck the ear with their novelty, as well as importance. They became still more popular, after their return from Georgia, whither zeal for the gospel had carried them. And nothing awakened greater attention to their preaching, than their quitting the universal habit of reading their sermons from a book, without any animation, and addressing extempore discourses to the congregations where they ministered.

The multitudes which followed them were much affected—a great and visible change was produced in the minds of many. The attention paid to these ministers, and the blessing evident on their labours, roused them to increasing vigorous exertions. They were always at their work, preaching wherever they could procure admittance into the churches; and not a little flattered by the popularity attending their ministration. They must have been more than men, if they had not been so. Some wild fire could hardly fail to mingle in the sacred flame—whilst the noise they raised by their preaching was inconceivable.

At first they appeared united in sentiment; but they had not long laboured, before it was evident they differed in the points which had occasioned so much dispute. Mr. Wesley, the father of Methodism, with his brother, and those of his opinion, leaned to the Arminian doctrine—strong against irrelative decrees, but firmly maintaining the fall and its consequences, the necessity of justification by faith alone, and the operation of the Holy Ghost, to produce all righteousness and true holiness: but they taught withal the universality of Christ's redemption, and the offering of his body, alike for those who are lost, as for those who are saved: and in point of *free-will* they supposed, though still as a gift of grace, that every man had *some* powers of will within the sphere of his own exertion, which first led to conversion—that the benefits of Christ's redemption extended to those who had never heard of his name—that by improving the measure of light and grace within him, every man might be saved—but that no man could be sure of perseverance in grace: and, that in possibility, notwithstanding what Christ hath done and suffered, all might reject the remedy provided, and perish eternally.

Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Harvey, and those who united with them



in sentiment, held the articles of the church in the sense usually termed Calvinistic; and which an ingenuous enquirer can hardly hesitate to confess was the sense of the compilers. Though in age Mr. Whitfield was younger than the Wesleys, in zeal and labours he had no superior; his amazing exertions are well known; and the effects of them were prodigious through the whole land. He confined not his ministry to England—Scotland enjoyed the benefit of his visits, and furnished innumerable evidences of the power with which he spake; nor were his efforts restricted to Britain, but extended to America; whither the Mr. Wesleys had first led the way. We mean not to enter on a life so well drawn up by Dr. Gillies, but observe, that by the labours of these indefatigable men, a flood of gospel light broke upon the nation. At first they were wholly confined to the Church of England, as their attachment to it by education was strong: and had they been fixed in any settled station, they had not improbably lived and died, good men, useful men, but unnoticed and unknown—a series of providences had designed them for greater and more extensive usefulness. The churches growing unable to contain the crowds which flocked after them. Mr. Whitfield first at Bristol, in 1739, resolved to visit and preach to the wild colliers in the woods, who seldom attended any worship: and his signal success among them, encouraged his persevering efforts. On his return to London, he used the same means of field-preaching, at Kennington Common, and Moorfields, being now generally excluded from the churches to which he had himself somewhat contributed, by perhaps too severe animadversion on the clergy, as well as the envy and disgust that this singular popularity had occasioned.

Nor were Mr. John Wesley and his brother Charles, less zealously employed, but also took the field, and preached every where. The congregations under the canopy of heaven were prodigious: sometimes, indeed riotous and insulting, but in general solemn and attentive. By these labours multitudes were daily added to the church of such as should be saved.

Hitherto the principal leaders, though acting independent of each other, had maintained apparent fellowship; but the difference of their sentiments respecting the doctrines of predestination and grace, began to awaken unpleasant disputes, which were carried on sometimes with too much asperity. Yet the corruption of human nature, justification by faith alone, and the necessity of a divine change of heart, by the power of the Holy Ghost; these fundamental truths, both professed zealously to hold and teach; nor did the division which followed between them, retard the progress of the work. They parted, indeed, like Paul and Barnabas; but the extent of the sphere of their

usefulness was thereby enlarged; Unable to supply the numberless places and congregations collected by their labours with a regularly ordained ministry, they each associated with themselves lay preachers, the best informed and qualified whom they could find; and thus multiplied themselves over the face of the whole land. Their societies increased by thousands, and their ministry was blessed to the great revival of religion wherever they itinerated.

This immense body of Methodists, from the difference of the doctrines each maintained respecting the decrees of God, and free-will necessarily divided into two separate communions, the Calvinistic and Arminian; both of them professed predilection to the church, did not at all object to episcopal government as a church order; necessitated, from the situation in which they were placed, to preserve the congregations which they had collected and formed into societies, the great leaders, Wesley and Whitfield, appointed for their spiritual edification, local and itinerant preachers, to confirm their faith, and increase their numbers: themselves continuing the apostolic plan of itinerancy, and visiting in rotation the churches which their ministry had raised. Men more laborious than those principal persons were, since the Apostle days will hardly be found. They repeatedly travelled over a space more than the circumference of the globe; wherever they moved, they were as a flame of fire, and left a train of evangelical light behind them. They were in preaching unwearied, two, three, and sometimes four times a-day; and this often in places many miles distant from each other; and notice having been previously given of their coming, thousands awaited and welcomed them, heard them with reverence, and received them as angels of God. Thus immense congregations were formed through all parts of the kingdom, especially in the great manufacturing towns, among the tin-mines, and colliers. The aggregate amount of auditors must have been several hundred thousand, as the preachers themselves, in Mr. Wesley's connexion alone, in Europe and America, amounted, if we are rightly informed, at one time to about five hundred itinerant, and four thousand local preachers. All these continued occasionally to communicate with the Church of England, their original source; though they more frequently held communions among themselves; and received the elements from those ministers of the Church of England, who were in fellowship with the Methodists, or served among them. And on the whole they appeared to give a decided preference to the ordinance, as administered by the Presbyters of the established church; but their modes of procedure being charged as irregular, they had every discouragement from the heads of the church, and



no hopes of settlement in it. Hence, having erected places of worship of their own, and being no bigots to church government, they by degrees became more seldom occasional communicants in their parish churches, and confined themselves to their own ministers and places of worship. Yet for a long while they were very reluctant to appear to separate from the church established, and to this day, we apprehend, the great body is Episcopalian; and prefer that mode of government, to the Presbyterian or Independent mode.

At the time the Methodists arose, all the various denominations of dissenters from the established church, had suffered a great decline from evangelical principles and real godliness; and some much more than others, particularly the English Presbyterians. But many being awakened and revived by the labours of the itinerant evangelists, especially those of Mr. Whitfield, a spirit of renewed godliness returned in several congregations, and their stated pastors were roused to greater zeal and activity. The dissenters of all denominations thus evidently profited by the flame originally kindled by the ministers bred in the established church. From their itinerant and most able helpers, decaying congregations invited pastors to settle over them; new life was thus infused into the torpid mass. A multitude of churches arose among them, where there had been none before. The Independents especially profited hereby, as most of the newly formed societies preferred the Congregational model to the Presbyterian. Not that these pastors were such Independents by education or principle, as to have any radical objections, at least many of them, to the forms or order of the established church, but being excluded by what was branded as Methodism, from any prospect of admittance into the ministry there, they readily consented to preside over the churches which called them to the pastoral office; and thus also the Baptists as well as the Independents, have greatly enlarged their pale by similar accessions.

These itinerant preachers were men of popular and lively talents, and though not bred in the schools of the prophets, were often endued with great eloquence. Some of the more learned among the dissenters, regarded them indeed with a jealous eye, and felt mortified at the preference given to persons neither possessing the knowledge of languages, nor initiated into the mysteries of scientific literature; but their numerous audiences bespoke the favor of the people. And without the advantages of an education for the ministry, they have not been destitute of excellent gifts for the use of edifying. They were in general men of good natural understanding, well read in the scriptures of their mother tongue, the chief book indeed

which they studied. They were experimentally acquainted with the great fundamental truths of religion; they possessed a natural faculty of elocution, increased by the habit of frequent preaching. And what seemed infinitely superior to all the rest, they appeared deeply affected with the truths which they delivered; and as exemplary in their walk and conversation, as laborious in the work of the ministry; evidently delighting in the service, as their first and best wages.

Whilst these eminent revivers of evangelical truth, Messrs. Wesley and Whitfield, with their associates, were thus proceeding with increasing zeal in their several spheres of usefulness, the great Head of the Church was pleased to raise up another singular personage, who contributed exceedingly to enlarge the pale of what was called Methodism, and to strengthen the hands of those who laboured in the work of God our Saviour.

The noble and elect Lady Huntingdon, had lived in the highest circle of fashion; by birth a daughter of the House of Shirlly, by marriage united with the Earl of Huntingdon, both bearing the royal arms of England, as decendants from her ancient monarchs.

In very early infancy when only nine years old, the sight of a corpse about her own age, conveying to the grave, engaged her to attend the burial. There the first impressions of deep seriousness about an eternal world, laid hold on her conscience: and with many tears she cried earnestly to God on the spot, that whenever he should be pleased to take her away, he would deliver her from all her fears, and give her a happy departure. She often afterwards visited the grave, and always preserved a lively sense of the affecting scene.

Though no views of evangelical truth had hitherto opened on her mind, yet even during her juvenile days, she frequently retired for prayer, to a particular closet where she could not be observed: and in all her troubles found relief in pouring out her requests unto God. When she grew up, and was introduced into the world, she continued to pray that she might marry into a serious family. None kept up more of the ancient dignity and decency than the house of Huntingdon. With the head of that family she accordingly became united. Lady Betty and Lady Margaret Hastings, his lordship's sisters, were women of singular excellence.

In this high estate she maintained a peculiar seriousness of conduct. Though sometimes at court, and visiting in the higher circles, she took no pleasures in the fashionable follies of the great. In the country she was the lady Bountiful among her neighbours and dependents; and going still about to establish



her own righteousness, she endeavoured by prayer and fasting, and alm-deeds, to commend herself to the favour of the most High and most Holy.

The zealous preachers, who had been branded with the name of Methodist, had now awakened great attention in the land. Lady Margaret Hastings, happening to hear them, received the truth as it is in Jesus from their ministry; and was some years after united with the excellent Mr. Ingham, one of the first labourers in this plenteous harvest. Conversing with Lady Margaret one day on this subject, Lady Huntingdon was exceedingly struck with a sentiment she uttered, "that since she had known and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation, she had been as happy as an angel." To any such sensation of happiness Lady Huntingdon felt that she was yet a stranger.

A dangerous illness having soon after this brought her to the brink of the grave, the fear of death fell terribly upon her, and her conscience was greatly distressed. Hereupon she meditated, sending for Bishop Benson, of Gloucester, who had been Lord Huntingdon's tutor, to consult him, and unburden her mind. Just at that time the words of Lady Margaret returned strongly to her recollection, and she felt an earnest desire, renouncing every other hope, to cast herself wholly upon Christ for life and salvation. She instantly from her bed lifted up her heart to Jesus the Saviour, with this importunate prayer; and immediately all her distress and fear were removed, and she was filled with peace and joy in believing. Her disorder from that moment took a favourable turn; she was restored to perfect health, and what was better, to newness of life. She determined thenceforward to present herself to God, as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which she was now convinced was her reasonable service.

On her recovery, she sent a kind message to the Messrs. Wesleys, who were then preaching in the neighbourhood, that she was one with them in heart, cordially wishing them good speed in the name of the Lord, and assuring them of her determined purpose of living for Him, who died for her.

The change thus wrought upon her Ladyship became observable to all, in the open confession she made of the faith once delivered to the saints, and in the zealous support she began to give to the work of God, amidst all the reproach with which she was attended.

To the noble circle in which Lady Huntingdon moved, such professions and conduct appeared wondrous strange: but she had set her face as a flint, and refused to be ashamed of Christ and his cross. There were not wanting indeed some who under

the guise of friendship, wished Lord Huntingdon to interpose his authority; but, however he differed from her Ladyship in sentiment, he continued to show her the same affection and respect. He desired, however, she would oblige him, by conversing with Bishop Benson on the subject, to which she readily acquiesced.

The Bishop was accordingly sent for, in order to reason with her Ladyship respecting her opinions and conduct. But she pressed him so hard with articles and homilies; and so plainly and faithfully urged upon him the awful responsibility of his station under the great Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, that his temper was ruffled; and he rose up in haste to depart, bitterly lamenting that he had ever laid his hands on George Whitfield, to whom he imputed, though without cause, the change wrought in her Ladyship. She called him back; "My Lord," said she, "mark my words, when you come upon your dying bed, that will be one of the few ordinations you will reflect upon with complacency." It deserves remark, that Bishop Benson, on his dying bed, sent ten guineas to Mr. Whitfield, as a token of his favour and approbation, and begged to be remembered by him in his prayers.

We hope the present venerable Bishop of Worcester will not be displeased if we record a similar instance of his candor lately reported to us. As he preached frequently, he had observed a poor man remarkably attentive, and made him some little presents. After a while he missed his humble auditor, and meeting him, said, "John, how is it that I do not see you in the aisle as usual?" John with some hesitation replied, "My Lord, I hope you will not be offended, and I will tell you the truth. I went the other day to hear the Methodists, and I understood their plain words so much better, that I have attended ever since." The Bishop put his hand in his pocket, and gave him a guinea, with words to this effect, "God bless you, and go where you can receive the greatest profit to your soul."

We know of no place more proper to preserve another anecdote, which we received from our excellent friend, the Rev. Mr. Talbot, of St. Giles, Reading. When Archbishop Secker was laid on his couch with a broken thigh, and sensible of his approaching end, our dear departed friend, who had lived in great intimacy with him, and received his preference from him, visited him at Lambeth. Before they parted, "You will pray with me, Talbot," said the Archbishop. Mr. Talbot rose and went to look for a prayer book, "That is not what I want now," said the dying prelate, "kneel down by me, and pray for me in the way you used to do." With which command our



dear brother readily complied, and prayed earnestly from his heart for his dying friend, whom he saw no more.

Lady Huntingdon's heart was now truly engaged to God, and she resolved to her best ability, to lay herself out to do good. The poor around her were the natural objects of her attention. These she bountifully relieved in their necessities, visited in sickness, conversed with, and led them to their knees, praying with them and for them. The Prince of Wales, one day at court, asked a lady of fashion, Lady Charlotte E. where our Lady Huntingdon was, that she so seldom visited the circle. Lady Charlotte, replied with a sneer, "I suppose praying with her beggars." The Prince shook his head, and said, "Lady Charlotte, when I am dying, I shall be happy to seize the skirt of Lady Huntingdon's mantle, to lift me up with her to Heaven."\*

During Lord Huntingdon's life she warmly espoused the cause of God and truth, though her means of usefulness were necessarily circumscribed, and her family engagements occupied much of her time and attention. On his demise, she was left the entire management of her children, and of their fortunes, which she improved with the greatest fidelity. Become her own mistress, she resolved to devote herself wholly to the service of Christ, and the souls redeemed by his blood. Her zealous heart embraced cordially all whom she esteemed real Christians, whatever their denomination or opinions might be, but being herself in sentiment more congenial with Mr. Whitfield, than the Messrs. Wesleys, she favoured these especially who were the ministers of the Calvinistic persuasion, according to the literal sense of the articles of the Church of England. And with an intention of giving them a greater scene of usefulness, she opened her house in Park-street, for the preaching of the Gospel, supposing as a peeress of the realm, that she had an indisputable right to employ as her family chaplains, those ministers of the Church whom she patronised. On the week days her kitchen was filled with the poor of the flock, for whom she provided instruction; and on the Lord's day the great and noble were invited to spend the evening in her drawing-room, where Messrs. Whitfield, Romaine, Jones, and other ministers of Christ, addressed them faithfully in all the words of this life, and were heard with apparently deep and serious attention.

Lady Huntingdon now became the open and avowed patroness of all zealous ministers of Christ, especially of those who were suffering for the testimony of Jesus. Mr. Romaine, on his being turned out of St. George's Church, received parti-

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\* These anecdotes are related by Hawica.

cular tokens of her favour; and though till then unknown to her, he was honored with her expressions of kindness and approbation.

The limits to which we are restricted forbid our descending into a variety of particulars, that we may advert to the subsequent steps taken by this venerable woman, more immediately and extensively to spread the knowledge of salvation, and to restore the desolations of the church.

The illness of her younger son, which proved fatal, had led her to Brighthelmstone, for the sake of sea-bathing. There her active spirit having produced some awakening among the people, she erected a little chapel contiguous to her house, that the gospel might be preached to them. This was the first fruits of her great increase; it was enlarged, and that not sufficing to contain the congregation, it was a third time taken down and rebuilt. Many can say they were born there. The success attending this first effort encouraged greater. Bath, the resort of fashion, beheld an elegant and commodious place of worship, raised by the same liberal hand. Oathall, Brethly, and various other places, received the gospel by her means. At first she confined herself to the ministers of the established church, as her preachers, many of whom obeyed her invitation, and laboured in the places where she resided: but her zeal enlarged with her success, and a great variety of persons throughout the kingdom, begging her assistance, in London, and many of the most populous cities, she set up the standard of the gospel, and purchased, built, or hired chapels, vast and commodious, for the performance of divine service. As these multiplied exceedingly through England, Ireland, and Wales, the ministers who had before laboured for her Ladyship, were unequal to the task; and some unwilling to move in a sphere so extensive, and which began to be branded as irregular, and to meet great opposition: yet many persevered in their cordial services, when summoned to the work, and were content to bear the cross. As the work greatly enlarged beyond her power to supply the chapels with regular ministers, Lady Huntingdon resolved to employ the same methods as Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitfield had pursued with so much success before. She invited laymen of piety and abilities, to exhort and keep up the congregations she had established.

In order to provide proper persons for the work, she now retired into Wales, where she erected a college for training up young men to the ministry. From thence she dispatched the requisite supplies for the increased congregations under her patronage; and as the calls were often urgent, her students were too frequently thrust forth into the harvest, before they



had made any considerable proficiency in the languages, or sacred literature, in which it had been her intention they should be instructed. Few of them knew much more than their native tongue, yet being men of strong sense, real devotedness to God, their ministry was very greatly blessed, and the accounts of their success animated her to greater exertions. They were itinerant—moved from congregation to congregation, in a rotation established; and her correspondence with them to regulate and provide a constant supply, was a labour to which her active spirit alone was equal.

Many of these sought a settlement either in the church or among the dissenters, in preference to a life of itinerancy; and as they were under no bonds but choice, they often quitted her connection. Not less than fifty such laboured in the church, or among the dissenters, with benediction. Their places were always supplied, and others offered to fill their ranks, as death or retirement from the service thinned their numbers.

Though Lady Huntingdon devoted the whole of her substance to the gospel, yet it is not a little surprising, how her income sufficed for the immensity of expense in which she was necessarily involved. Her jointure was no more than twelve hundred pounds a-year; and only after the death of her son, a few years preceeding her own, she received the addition of another thousand. She often involved herself in expenses for building chapels, which she found it burthensome to discharge. But the Lord brought her always honorably through her engagements, and provided a supply when her own was exhausted.

To the age of fourscore and upwards, she maintained all the vigour of youth; and though in her latter years the contraction of her throat reduced her almost to a liquid diet, her spirits never seemed to fail her; and to the very last days of her life, her active mind was planning still greater and more extensive schemes of usefulness, for the universal spread of the Gospel of Christ.

Lady Huntingdon was rather above the middle size. Her presence noble, and commanding respect; her address singularly engaging; her intelligence acute; her diligence indefatigable; and the constant labour of her thoughts and correspondence inconceivable. Never was there a creature more dead to all self-indulgence, or more liberally disposed to supply the calls of the gospel. She often possessed no more than the gown she wore. She was one of the poor who lived on her bounty; but her most distinguishing excellence was, the fervent zeal which always burned in her bosom, to make known the Gospel of the grace of

God; which no disappointment quenched, no labours slackened, no opposition discouraged, no progress of years abated: it flamed strongest in her late-t moments. The world has seldom seen such a character—thou-sands and tens of thousands will have reason, living and dying, to bless her memory, as having been the happy instrument of bringing them out of darkness into marvellous light; and multitudes saved by her instrumentality, have met her in the regions of glory, to rejoice together in the presence of God and the Lamb.

But it may be said, was she a perfect character? No. This is not the lot of mortals on this side of the grave. When the moon walketh in her brightness, her shadows are most visible.

Lady Huntingdon was in her temper warm and sanguine—her predilections for some, and her prejudices against others, were sometimes too hastily adopted—and by these she was led to form conclusions not always correspondent with truth and wisdom.

The success attending her efforts, seemed to impress her mind with a persuason, that a particular benediction would rest upon whomsoever she should send forth; and rendered her choice not always judicious: though seldom were there ever less offences in so extended a work.

She had so long directed the procedures of her connexion, that she too seldom asked the advice of the judicious ministers who laboured with her; and bore not passive contradiction.

We are the historian of truth, as far we know it. She needs no posthumous fame to blazen her worth; and she is past far beyond all human censure which can effect her. The great Head of the Church hath, we have full confidence, decided her character, pitied her infirmities, pardoned her iniquities, and welcomed her to glory, with well done, thou good and faithful servant.

At her death, Lady Huntingdon left her chapels to trustees and executors, for the continuance of the same plan; which they have pursued with some measure of the same disinterested zeal, and with increasing success. Not less than one hundred thousand persons continue to have the gospel preached to them by their means. The same steps are pursued in England, Wales, and Ireland; and though the property left by her Ladyship to carry on the work of God, was seized by the Americans of Georgia and Carolina, where it lay, and her assets in England, the chapels excepted, were found not sufficient for her engagements; yet, however unable to recover her estates, all claims have been discharged; and the chapels, according to her will, maintained with less incumbrances than at her decease.

The seminary in Wales, ceased at her Ladyship's death, the



lease being just expired, and no endowment left, her income dying with her: but a new college, on a plan more promising for literature, has been established a Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, near London; and under the superintending care of trustees appointed for that purpose. A number of students have been already educated there, and many are gone forth, now preaching the gospel with much acceptance, from this seminary. It cannot, indeed, be supposed, that in the course of three or four years, the terms allotted for their education, much scientific attainments can be made; yet, we have the pleasure of finding by experience, that in this time diligently improved, a competent knowledge of the sacred languages may be obtained: and what is more important and desirable, by a constant exercise of speaking before the president, students, and others, a facility and propriety of address is acquired, highly desirable for them in their future ministrations. Into this seminary none are admitted, but after a strict enquiry into their characters, and repeated examinations into their Christian experience and natural abilities. They are required to bring recommendations, and authentic testimonials, from the ministers and others with whom they have been accustomed to worship. They are not received too young, nor much advanced in life; usually between the age of twenty and thirty. They are expected to give the most satisfactory account of their own real conversion to God, and of the reasons which engage them to devote themselves to the ministry. They must appear possessed of acute, or at least promising faculties for improvement. And as the greatest attention is paid to their education, and the disposition with which they are admitted, secures the most unremitting application to study, their improvement hath been hitherto remarkably rapid, considering the necessity of beginning in most instances with the first rudiments of grammar in each of the languages.

This institution promises the greatest utility. The education and maintenance of the students is entirely free: and at the expiration of the term of their studies, when they have been examined and judged fit to proceed in the ministry, they are under no restrictions, but may apply for admissions into the established church, or any other denomination of Christians. If Christ be but preached, the end of the seminary is answered.

Thus, among those who bear the name of Methodists, there are three distinct bodies, the features of which are very discriminating. Indeed, like the term *Pictist*, the name of *Methodist* is often applied to serious persons, who have no connection immediately with the societies of Mr. Wesley, or Mr. Whitfield, or the successors of Lady Huntingdon. But each of these, though denominated by the general name of *Methodists*,

has a discipline and regulations peculiar to themselves: these we will cursorily remark.

The body of Arminian Methodists, who derive their name and order from Mr. Wesley, pursue the plan laid down by him. During his life, such was his personal influence, that it rendered his recommendations the general rule of their Society; so that all his people, throughout the British dominions, to which also America might be added, looked to him as their president and director. His time was spent in one continued voyage or journey, visiting regularly every Society in the vast circle of his connexion, and usually preaching every day, and frequently twice or thrice. He accustomed all his congregations to his plan of itinerancy and a frequent change of ministers. A *general Conference annually*, fixed the stations of the preachers, and settled two or three within a certain district, round which they moved in the course of a fortnight or three weeks, generally preaching somewhere every evening, and holding Societies for prayer and mutual exhortation. All who joined in these, contributed a small sum weekly for the support of the general work, which stewards appointed, regularly accounted for. By this a provision was made for the maintenance of the preachers, according to the number of their families, or occasional necessities. The profits arising from publications, circulated from a press of their own, very considerably increased this fund for the support of their cause. Sometimes the stay of the preachers in their rounds is continued for more than one year, but this is fixed by the general conference. The same steps have been pursued since Mr. Wesley's death: and they admit no president, but a few of the most able preachers sway their deliberations. On the whole considering the nature of such a body, united merely by voluntary association, it is amazing that more disputes and divisions have not arisen. Their zeal, their activity, and usefulness, continue undiminished. America, and the Leeward Islands have been greatly benefitted by their labours, as well as the several parts of the British dominions in Europe; and the impulse given to this great machine, is continued in the same line of direction by those who sit in the annual Conference. For some time past they have had an ordination among themselves, and now the people generally communicate with their own teachers: their connexion with the established church is hereby greatly weakened; and it will probably issue in a complete separation, not from any aversion to episcopal government, but from despair of procuring episcopal ordination for the pastors whom they have chosen.

In doctrine to the Wesleyan Methodists, both in Europe and America are one. The following are the articles of religion,



as published in the "Doctrines and discipline of the Methodist Episcopal church."

1. There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness: the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead, there are three persons of one substance, power, and eternity;—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

2. The Son, who is the word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men.

3. Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all the things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

4. The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

5. The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation: so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scriptures, we do understand those canonical books of the old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the church.

*Here follow the names of the canonical books of the Scriptures.*

6. The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testament, everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only mediator between God and man, being both God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.

7. Original sin standeth not in the falling of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the corruption of the na-

ture of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

8. The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ, preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

9. We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings:—Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

10. Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgments: yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

11. Voluntary works, besides over and above God's commandments, which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, when ye have done all that is commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants.

12. Not every sin willingly committed after justification, is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification: after we have received the Holy Ghost we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and by the grace of God, rise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned, who say they can no more sin as long as they live here or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

13. The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

14. The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardon, worshipping, and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and



grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but repugnant to the word of God.

15. It is a thing plainly repugnant to the word of God, and the custom of the primitive church, to have public prayer in the church, or to minister the sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people.

16. Sacraments ordained of Christ, are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession: but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him.

There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called sacraments; that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have partly grown out of the *corrupt* following of the apostles: and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign, or ceremony ordained of God.

The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. xi. 29.

17. Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized: but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church.

18. The supper of the Lord is not only a sign that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death: insomuch, that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitious.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper, only after a heavenly and Scriptural manner. And the means

whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, is faith.

The sacrament of the Lord's supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about lifted up, or worshipped.

19. The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people; for both the parts of the Lord's supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike.

20. The offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual: and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the which it is commonly said, that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable, and dangerous deceit.

21. The ministers of Christ were not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.

22. It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the church, and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular church may ordain, change, and abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.

23. The president, the congress, the general assemblies, the governors, and the councils of state, *as the delegates of the people*, are the rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the constitution of the United States, and by the constitutions of their respective states. And the said states are a sovereign and independent nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.\*

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\* As far as it respects civil affairs, we believe it the duty of Christians, and especially all Christian ministers, to be subject to the supreme authority of the country where they may reside, and to use all laudable means to enjoin obedience to the *powers that be*; and therefore it is expected that all our preachers and people, who may be under the British, or any other government, will behave themselves as peaceable and orderly subjects.



24. The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding every man ought of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor according to his ability.

25. As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James his apostle; so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.

The followers of Mr. Whitfield are, in the aggregate, a body nearly as numerous as the former, but not so compact and united. Their principles being Calvinistic, recommended them especially to the various denominations of dissenters, and to those of the reformed religion in Scotland and abroad. A great number of these joined Mr. Whitfield, as well as multitudes who left the established Church. These were formed into congregations in diverse places, who, though considering themselves as one body, have not the same union and interchange as the followers of Mr. Wesley. The first and principal of the Churches, at Tottenham-court, observes the Church ceremonies and liturgy, the others use in general free prayer. Yet these consider themselves not as distinct independent Churches, but formed under a federal connection: and some of these have no stated pastor, but are supplied by a rotation of ministers. They have an ordination among themselves; and where there is a stationary ministry, they still hold connection with each other, and come up as invited or called upon to the greater congregations, for a fixed space according to an appointed routine. All these places of worship are supported, not like Mr. Wesley's by a general fund; but the expences of the meeting, and salaries of ministers, are provided by the several congregations, and collected and expended in each by stewards chosen out of the principal people. The great Chapels, in London, are managed by trustees, who were first appointed by Mr. Whitfield himself; and on their several demises, have most faithfully and disinterestedly devolved the trust on others; men hitherto above suspicion, and themselves the most liberal supporters of the cause entrusted to their care: and thus so far from diminishing since Mr. Whitfield's death, the numbers who have joined them are vastly increased. These are every day growing more into bodies of real dissenters, and losing the attachment to the Church, which was at first strongly preserved. Yet they continue very different from the Independents, whom they most resemble, in a variety of particulars—respecting itinerancy,

Church government, change of ministers, and mutual and more open communion. These congregations are very numerous, and very seriously attended. No where is the life of godliness more apparently preserved. The lay preachers, however, are comparatively become few, the most having been ordained among themselves; and the body is not governed by a general Conference, nor the work supported by a common stock; but each congregation provides for its own expenses. Some Chapels around London, depend for their supplies of preachers to be furnished from the great bodies in the metropolis. The richer congregations are always to assist the poorer in building or enlarging places of worship, and in helping a recent and weaker Society, till they become sufficiently numerous, and able to defray their own expenses.

As the Countess of Huntingdon left all her numerous Chapels in the hands of trustees, they pursue exactly the same method of procedure as she did. A number of ministers of the established Church, and especially from Wales, where she long resided, continue to supply in rotation the larger Chapels of her erection, and those who were her students in her college in Wales, or have since been educated at Cheshunt, with others approved and chosen for the work, are dispersed through Great Britain and Ireland. All these ministers serve in *succession*; not depending upon the congregations in which they minister for their support, but on the trustees, under whose direction they move. Every congregation furnishes a stipulated maintenance to the minister during his residence among them, and his travelling expenses: but in no congregation do they remain as stated pastors, but expect a successor, as soon as the time affixed for their stay is completed. Nor can any of the congregations dismiss the person resident, or procure a change, but by application to the trustees, such being the conditions on which they engage to supply them with a succession of ministers. If any minister is peculiarly useful, and request is made that his stay may be prolonged, it is usually complied with nay, sometimes at the desire of the people he is allowed to settle among them, liable however to a call of two or three months annually, to be employed in the work at large. And if any minister is not acceptable, or his ministry beneficial, his stay is shortened, and he is removed to another station. Two rules are established and known: 1st. That if any person leaves the connexion, to which he has no tie, but choice, he is admitted into it no more; though the trustees as cordially rejoice in his usefulness in another denomination of Christians, as in their own. 2d. It is also constantly enforced, that if any man departs from the Calvinistic articles of the Church of England, or



incurs reproach by any accusations of immorality, he is summoned to exculpate himself before the trustees, and heard with all candor; but if the fact be established, he is dismissed, without any possibility of being ever again admitted to minister in any of their congregations. The bent of these congregations is strongly to the established Church. Her liturgy is used in public worship in all the principal Chapels. Ministers of the establishment, such is the lenity of the times, serve without interruption. Indeed, all the persecution for religious differences is become so opposite to the spirit of the nation, that these things usually pass without censure. Probably the bishops themselves wish not to alienate large bodies of the most active and exemplary Christians, farther from the Church, by useless irritation.

It is observable, that all these great bodies, though driven to worship in places of their own erection, in order to secure the preaching of such evangelical principles as they cannot find in the churches in general, would be happy to have the cause removed, that hath compelled them to these expedients; and were the bishops and clergy zealous to inculcate the great fundamentals of Gospel truth, and to adorn the doctrine by a life of spiritual religion, the greater part of these partial seceders would probably return to the forms and worship of the established Church. As it is, their numbers every day increase; and whilst carelessness and lukewarmness cause the noblest edifices to be deserted, every little meeting is crowded with hearers, wherever a minister, earnest and evangelical, labours from his heart, for the salvation of men's souls.

Such has been the progress of what is called *Methodism* in the great bodies that more immediately bear that name, both among those of the Church as well as the dissenters from it; and has been the means of re-kindling the zeal of very many, so as to produce a vast alteration for the better in the conduct of thousands and tens of thousands. Predilection for the establishment, strongly attaches many to it, who have received their religious impressions from one or other of these Methodist Societies, or from some of their own clergy, who lie under the imputation of being *methodistically inclined*, that is, such as *literally* and with *apparent zeal*, inculcate the doctrinal articles they have subscribed, and live in a state of greater piety and separation from the world, than the generality of their brethren. The number of these is of late amazingly increased. Where before scarcely a man of this stamp could be found, some hundreds, as rectors or curates in the established Church, inculcate the doctrines which are branded with Methodism; and every where, throughout the kingdom, one or more, and sometimes several, are to be found within the compass of a few miles, who ap-

prove themselves faithful labourers in the Lord's vineyard. They naturally associate among themselves, and separate from the corruption which is in the world. Every where they carry the stamp of peculiarity, and are marked by their brethren. Though carefully conforming to established rules, and strictly regular, they are every where objects of reproach, because their conduct cannot but reflect on those who choose not to follow such examples. They pay conscientious attention to the souls of their parishioners; converse with them on spiritual subjects, wherever they visit; encourage prayer and praise in the several families under their care; often meet them for these purposes; and engage them to meet and edify one another. Their exemplary conversation procures them reverence from the poor of the flock, as their faithful rebukes often bring upon them the displeasure of the worldling, the dissipated, and the careless. They join in none of the fashionable amusements of the age, frequent not the theatres, or scenes of dissipation, court no favour of the great, or human respects; their time and services are better employed in the more important labours of the ministry, preaching the word in season, out of season, and counting their work the best wages. They labour, indeed, under many discouragements. All the superior orders of the clergy shun their society. They have been often treated by their diocesans with much insolence and oppression. They can number no Bishop, nor scarcely a dignitary among them. Yet their number, strength, and respectability, continue increasing. May they grow into an host, like the host of God.

By the labours of these most excellent men, the congregations of Methodists and dissenters are greatly enlarged; and though during their lives and incumbency, they fill their Churches, and diminish the number of separatists; yet on their death or removal, they unintentionally add all the more serious part of their flocks to their brethren who are of a like spirit. For when the people have lost their good clergyman, and having no choice of a successor, find a man placed over them of an utterly different temper and conduct; in doctrine erroneous, as in his life unexampled; they are naturally driven to seek the same means of edification to which they have been accustomed, and which God hath given them the grace to know how truly to appreciate: as they have no such attachment to Church walls, as to be confined to them, where *Ishbosheth* is written thereon. When therefore they can hear nothing truly edifying from their parish minister, they search out some Methodist Chapel, or dissenting meeting, where the evangelical and reformed doctrines are taught, and where a people like themselves, worshipping God in spirit, assemble for mutual edification; and if they can find no



such, they raise one; associating among themselves, and appointing the most zealous and best informed to edify them; or making application for such to some one of the bodies of Methodists or Dissenters.

It is a pleasing feature of the present day, that the spirit of toleration and candor appears of late more diffused, and persecution discountenanced, though not utterly discontinued. During the first struggles of Methodism, many harsh and severe measures were taken, and wicked or prejudiced magistrates pushed the penal laws against sectaries to the extreme. Of late they have almost wholly slept, and those who were formerly despised and hated, at present are under a less odium from their profession, and more respected by their brethren. Their numbers have given them consequence in the national scale. The perilous times have engaged the chief attention of their countrymen. It is not a day to discourage religion, when impiety and infidelity are come in like a flood. Every government must perceive, that those citizens are most valuable, whose obedience and peaceableness are strengthened by religious principles.

The state of real godliness among us in general, has for some time past certainly been on the increase. The clergy in the Church, many of them at least, have been engaged to change the strain of moral preaching, for more frequent notice of the orthodox principles of Christ's divinity and atonement, and the necessity of true holiness. But it must be confessed, that even truth itself freezes upon the lips of those whose heart is not inflamed with the love of it; and who do not feel for others' souls by having felt the importance of seeking the salvation of their own.

The orthodox dissenters maintain a respectable profession. The Arian and Socinian congregations, which a few men of learning and philosophic attainments sought to support, have dwindled almost to nothing; and the only large and zealous bodies are those in which the ancient reformed doctrines are maintained with all their vigour; and this chiefly by ministers, who derive their birth from one or other of the great Methodist Societies.

To this source also are to be chiefly traced the zealous and successful efforts made of late by the *Missionary Society*, which have been already mentioned, to send the Gospel among the heathen; and it may justly be reckoned among the singular and happy effects, which have already resulted from this attempt to evangelize the lands of darkness and despair, that such an endeared union and cordiality hath been restored among the various denominations of Christians, who had so long stood in a

state of repulsion from each other. They have now agreed to sacrifice educational prejudices, and narrow bigotry, on the altar of Christian love. English and Scots, Episcopalians and Presbyterians, Methodists and Independents, have united in the great object of a heathen mission, and solemnly pledged themselves to each other, that neither politics, nor our different peculiarities, shall mingle with the Gospel truth, which we desire to impart to the nations, but that all who go on this self-denying service shall have but one injunction from us, to preach and teach Jesus Christ in primitive simplicity; prescribing no exclusive Church order, or form of discipline; but wishing every man to maintain true communion with his brethren, and whenever success shall crown their labours, and congregations be formed among our black, or brown, or olive coloured brethren, to avoid as much as possible all disputes about matters non-essential, to follow to the best of their judgments, the scriptural model of the Gospel Church; and to maintain carefully among themselves, the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Nor hath this noble attempt failed to attract the notice of our foreign brethren, whose correspondence hath testified their high delight at our commencements, who are praying for its abundant success, and in America, and on the Continent, have been roused up to similar exertions, and are preparing to run the same race with us, where emulation is laudable, and ambition to excel, a truly Christian grace.

The Missionary Society hath also produced the happiest effects at home. Many of its members have begun to exert themselves vigorously to spread the evangelical doctrines in their various neighborhoods. Different itinerant Societies have been established, in order to send instruction to the poor in the villages where the Gospel is not preached; to open schools for their children; to converse with the ignorant, and visit the sick; and many congregations every Lord's day, send out some of their most zealous and intelligent members for these gracious purposes. By these means much attention hath been awakened in the souls of many, and promising appearances give good hope through grace, that his labour of love will not be in vain in the Lord. Probably not less than five hundred places for divine worship have been opened within the last three years.

Many of the episcopal clergy, and others of sound principles, and faithful hearts, who for reasons apparently to them justifiable, had withheld themselves from the more enlarged society for missions, composed of all denominations, have felt themselves either reproved or excited to make some similar efforts among their brethren; confining themselves exclusively to the dominant profession. Their Society is yet in embryo, but it will not



want encouragement; and all who have the good of souls at heart must therein rejoice, if the Gospel of Christ be more diffusively spread. Their success will gladden our hearts, and the more enlarged and vigorous their efforts, the more shall they be praised.

It would be truly happy if these movements on every side engaged the attention of the two long established Societies among us, *for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts, and for promoting Christian knowledge*. Their funds are immense, and adequate to any undertaking. It is to be lamented that those, who have been chosen by them hitherto, have too often been selected with so little regard to missionary talents; and that their vast revenues have not answered any very considerably useful purpose; at least none such as might have been hoped, if their choice had been more judicious, and the plans for promoting the Gospel more vigorously pursued. Should a happy turn be given to these societies, and men of God arise, and be patronised by them, as they have all the countenance and help of government to forward their efforts, it is impossible to say what a door of entrance might be opened to the Gentiles, in the yet unexplored, and unattempted regions of the world; especially in New Holland; the Isles of the Pacific Ocean; the northern parts of America; and above all, the immense regions of Africa, still to us a *terra incognita*. A glorious scene! but we fear a blessing rather to be hoped than realised in our day, now drawing to its evening.

We are seeking the spiritual Church of Christ, and are filled with comfort at the spread of the Gospel in the land. Multitudes of the *established Church*, ministers and people, are blessed monuments of redeeming love. Multitudes of *every other denomination* stand high in faithful and vigorous exertions for the glory of our common Lord. We are sure he will say, I have much people in this place. And amidst all our miseries, which are not few, and our prospects, which, as a nation, have been abundantly discouraging, this is the great sheet anchor of hope to every real believer. If the Lord had meant to destroy us, he would not have shewed us, as Manoah's wife observed, such and such things.

It is true we have liberally partaken of the fashionable philosophy, and among the wise, the mighty, and the noble, the empire of scepticism is widely extended, and faith despised as a fable. It hath descended to the menial servant behind the chair, and to the drayman who can blaspheme and deride religion. But against the common enemy that cometh in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord continues to lift up the standard of his Gospel, and many are not ashamed to fight manfully under

the banner of the cross. Indeed, the mode of the contest is changed: it is not now between true religion and false religion, but between true religion and no religion.

Before we quit this subject, it may be worth a moments attention, to sketch a portrait of the two great characters who eminently contributed to this revival of religion among us. As both favoured us with their cordial regard, and though more in unison with the one than the other, we have ever desired to give honour to whom honour is due, and hope never to be ashamed of the friendship of John Wesley.

John Wesley was of the inferior size, his visage marked with intelligence; singularly neat and plain in his dress; a little cast in his eye, observable on particular occasions; upright, graceful, and remarkably active. His understanding, naturally excellent and acute, was highly stored with the attainments of literature: and he possessed a fund of anecdote and history, that rendered his company as entertaining as instructive. His mode of address in public was chaste and solemn, though not illumined with those coruscations of eloquence which marked, if we may use that expression, the discourses of his rival George Whitfield; but there was a divine simplicity, a zeal, a venerableness in his manner, which commanded attention, and never forsook him in his latest years; when at fourscore, he retained still all the freshness of vigorous old age. His health was remarkably preserved amidst a scene of labour and perpetual exertions of mind and body, to which few would have been equal. Never man possessed greater personal influence over the people connected with him. Nor was it an easy task to direct so vast a machine, where amidst so many hundred wheels in motion, some moved eccentrically, and hardly yielded to the impulse of the main spring. I need not speak of the exemplariness of his life, too many eyes were upon him to admit of his halting; nor could his weight have been maintained a moment longer, than the fullest conviction impressed his people, that he was an eminently favoured saint of God, and as distinguished for his holy walk, as for his vast abilities, indefatigable labour, and singular usefulness.

His enemies reviled him, and would if possible rob him of the meed of well-deserved honour, by imputing to him objects below the prize he had in view. Never was there a more disinterested character; but he was a man, and he must have been more than a man, if with the consciousness of his own devotedness, the divine blessing on his labours, and the high admiration in which he was held by his followers, had he not sometimes thought of himself more highly than he ought to think. We exhibit no faultless monsters. Elias was a man of like passions as ourselves.



His singular situation led him to imagine that the glorious Head of the Church favoured him with especial interpositions in his behalf, which he was sometimes ready to construe as miraculous.

He yielded a too credulous ear to the reports and pretensions of others, and was thus often the dupe of ignorance and presumption.

He hastily at times advanced, what farther information, or maturer judgment compelled him to retract or soften.

In the article of marriage he acted contrary to the celibacy he professed to recommend; but this change of sentiment and conduct implied nothing criminal, unless it were the precipitancy of his former determination.

His rooted aversion to the doctrines called Calvinistic, might be supposed to proceed from a conscientious apprehension, that they had an unfavourable aspect on the practice of spiritual religion, however groundless such supposition was in reality, and however evident the contrary effects appeared in those who held them. But his bitterness and asperity towards those who defended them, and his harsh imputations on the God they worshipped, whatever provocations he might plead, were utterly inexcusable.

But above all, that which appeared in Mr. John Wesley, the most censurable part of his conduct, was his very unfair statement of the arguments of his Calvinistic adversaries, which in a man of his acuteness of intellect, will hardly admit of the plea of unintentional mistake.

We are called upon to speak the truth, and we intend to do it from our heart, without respect to persons, to the best of our knowledge. Mr. Wesley is gone to give account of himself to the proper Judge, by whom we doubt not all his iniquity is pardoned, and his infirmities covered. And now that envy and enmity have been some time laid asleep in his grave, we rejoice in observing his character rise in general estimation, and most highly respected by those who knew him best. It will now hardly be a question with any man, whether he would not rather have been John Wesley, who died not worth ten pounds, than Lavington, Bishop of Exeter, who so bitterly persecuted him.

GEORGE WHITFIELD was the son of an inn-keeper at Gloucester. From his early youth he had received deep impressions of religion; and he carried with him to the University of Oxford, a seriousness of mind very uncommon. He began his active career, even before he was in orders, visiting the prisons, and instructing the poor. Bishop Benson was so delighted with his early piety, that he ordained him at the age

of twenty-one And his first essay was a striking specimen of his future popularity, being heard with the most uncommon and awakened concern. His person was manly, and grew large as he advanced in years, his voice remarkably musical, and capable of the most various intonations, with a natural eloquence, too singular not to command the most profound attention. His manner was often highly gracefull and oratorical: and though a cast in his eyes, strongly marked, prevented the vivid impression which that organ is peculiarly suited to make, yet no man with such a disadvantage ever looked with stronger sensibility: and after a second hearing the defect was forgotten. Never did a man possess greater command of the human passions, or better knew the way to the consciences of his hearers: he had arrows in his quiver, that himself only knew how to sharpen. His literary attainments were moderate, though not defective in the learned languages; but his thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures, and the peculiar art of introducing and illustrating every subject he treated, not only won the ear to listen, but left an impression on the mind never to be effaced. His labours in both hemispheres were immense; his courage undaunted; his zeal unquenchable; he fell a martyr to his work. The violence of his exertions shook his constitution, whilst the more placid Wesley, with equal constancy of preaching, preserved his health to fourscore and upwards, unimpaired. Perhaps no man since the days of St. Paul, not even Luther himself, was ever personally blest to the call and conversion of so many souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, as George Whitfield. The immense collections he made for charitable purposes, sharpened the tongue of slander. Time hath affixed the seal of integrity to all his procedures. He was reviled for his unguarded expressions, and some enthusiastic flights; but he disarmed his enemies by ingenuous acknowledgements and correction of his mistakes. How a youth surrounded with such popularity, and conscious of his own powers, was preserved from hatching the old Serpent's egg, laid in every human heart, is wonderful. The keen eye of malevolence was upon him ready to seize occasion against him, or to make it; and it is a proof of no inconsiderable excellence, where so many watched for his halting, that amidst the most virulent abuse, so little could be found justly to accuse him. They who knew him best must witness, how holily and unblameably he had his conversion in the world. Indeed he was so taken up with the unwearied labours of his ministry, in preaching, religious exercises, and advice to those who were daily applying to him, that he had sometimes scarcely leisure for necessary food. The very things for which he was abused, he esteemed



his glory; and resolved to spend and be spent in the service of the souls for whom Christ died. He would have himself acknowledged many more than his nearest friends, or the bitterest of his enemies could discover. He is now alike beyond censure or cendemnation. What we remarked in him, we will speak and not be ashamed.

In his preaching he sometimes pushed the ludicrous to the debasement of the dignity of the sacred ministry. He told a story so well, that it seduced him occasionally to pursue a vein of humour, more suited to excite risibility than to awaken seriousness; though some impressive truth always closed the relation.

The Orphan House of Georgia, which he adopted with too partial affection, seems to have engaged him in difficulties and immensity of expense, greater than any utility which ever appeared to be derived from it; and the vast collections he made for it, though faithfully applied, gave a handle to the slanders of suspicion.

He too frequently indulged in the censures of the clergy, which however just they might be, seemed the effect of resentment, and would rather tend too exasperate than conciliate their attention. Yet it is well known he was remarkably kind spirited, and averse to controversy and its bitterness: and his most intimate friends bear witness, that his temper was as amiable, and his conversation as singularly cheerful, as his piety was deep and sincere.

On the whole, as a man, as a Christian, as a minister, we shall not we fear, look upon his like again speedily. After passing through evil report and good report, during more than thirty years of incessant labour, he entered into his rest in AMERICA, which had been peculiarly benefitted by his visits; having crossed the Atlantic thirteen times, to preach the everlasting Gospel, with the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven. Whatever ignorance of his real character, the fatuity of prejudice, or the insolence of pride may have suggested, the day is coming when his great and adorable Master will condemn every tongue that hath arisen up in judgment against him, and say in the presence of men and Angels, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

We must pass more concisely over the state of the *Scottish Church*; too much like the English, declined from her own first principles and primitive simplicity. Her ministers exalted in all human science and philosophical attainments above their predecessors; more polished in style and manners; deeper in mathematics and metaphysics; but not more evangelical, more zealous, more laborious. No where has more admired authors

won public approbation; no where have more dangerous and determined infidels appeared to corrupt the principles of the age; and the questions which have of late been discussed in the general assembly, awfully demonstrate how great a body preponderates there, against the advocates for the ancient doctrines, and the faith once delivered to the saints.

As the Scottish Church grew by degrees more and more into a worldly sanctuary, the abuses of patronage, and other things, which grieved and disgusted many of her most excellent pastors, produced divisions. These led to the Presbytery of Relief, the Seceders, the Burghers, and Anti-burghers, the shades of whose differences this history cannot particularize. Yet among those, much of the power of real godliness remained. An host arose, with the famed Erskines and their fellows at their head, who were zealous advocates for truth as it is in Jesus, and sought to revive the life of religion in their several congregations. Their labours were eminently blessed, and remarkable outpourings of God's spirit have been recorded in many parts of that vineyard. I shun not to use expressions, which may be branded as enthusiastic by modern divines. I believe the Holy Gost is yet given.

Truth compels me to say, that among these separates of various denominations, the greatest zeal to promote the evangelical doctrines hath been displayed, though the established Church hath not ceased to furnish many very eminent witnesses for God, not ashamed of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, but daring to be singular, and to bear his reproach. Under their ministry, a numerous and chosen people in the Scottish Kirk, as well as among the dissenters, continue to be reckoned to the Lord for a generation; and proportional to their numbers, the members of Kirk are generally better informed, and more evangelical in profession, than the people of England. But great and awful declensions from gospel purity must be acknowledged and lamented. The increase of wealth and fashionable manners have not improved their moral system; whilst the love of many hath waxed cold amidst the prevailing taste for science and dissipation.

It is however, a pleasing trait, and highly deserving mention in a work of this kind, that none have more cordially come forward in the heathen mission than our brethren in Scotland. The same spirit of charity and conciliation among the truly gracious of different denominations, hath softened down the bitterness of asperity, which had too frequently prevailed; and those have agreed to unite in labour and worship, who for a long while had been in a state of utter repulsion from each other; whilst the riches of their liberality have demonstrated how deeply they have the object at heart, of seeking the souls redeemed, in heath-



en lands, by the blood of the Lamb. Thus hath a body of confessors of evangelical truth, cleaving steadfastly to God, been yet preserved, as exemplary in their lives and labours, as sound in the faith, and able advocates for the ancient reformed doctrines. These, however unfashionable in the eyes of many, continue to be held fast by them as the most sacred deposit and most inestimable treasure. Scotland, in general, hath shared with England, and like Jesurun, hath waxed fat and kicked. Such is human corruption, that the abounding gifts of Providence too often afford occasion of abuse. How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven? Yet, when the spiritual Church is the object, North Britain will not be found the least among the thousands of Israel.

A blessed effort was made to revive the spirit of evangelical religion more generally in Scotland, by a Missionary Society instituted for *propagating the Gospel at home*. A number of zealous, well informed men, went about preaching every where, and their labours have been attended with the happiest effects. Many were roused from the torpor of indifference, many called by their ministry out of darkness into marvellous light. This awakened the enmity and jealousy of the craftsmen; and the *General Assembly of the Church of Scotland* issued a *pastoral admonition* against these faithful labourers, which breathed a bitterness and asperity, that could not fail of carrying its own antidote along with it, and held up most strikingly to the view of every serious mind, the difference between the revilers and the reviled. Whoever is at the pains to examine facts, and the assertions in this philippic against the promoters of evangelical religion, will find as many falsehoods as lines; so that happily, the more it is read, the more essentially it must serve the cause which it was designed to reprobate. Thus does the Lord bring always good out of evil. The wrath of man shall praise him.

Ireland still unhappily sunk in darkness and the superstition of popery, and little more adorned with real evangelical knowledge in those who have assumed the name of Protestants, hath long afforded matter of much sorrow to such as looked for the life and power of religion. The same zealous advocates for spiritual godliness, above recorded, have passed from England into that kingdom; and what is called Methodism, hath spread out its branches through many parts of that nation. God has also graciously raised up a precious band of the clergy in the established Church, though few indeed in number comparatively, and of small reputation among their fellows, yet they earnestly endeavoured to revive the spirit of zeal and true Christianity; to make the name of Jesus more precious, an-

his authority more respected. Many, by their labours, will, in the day of God, be written among the righteous; and when the Lord shall collect his redeemed, be found to have been born there.

It is to be lamented, that ignorance and popery still spread their thick mists over the bulk of the common people: and that the Protestants maintain but little more than their name and moral hatred to popery, the general profession of their fellow-subjects. Some change must shortly take place. The crisis approaches. May the God of all grace give a prosperous issue!

It is with pleasure we record a happy commencement of missionary labours among them, similar to that in Scotland. In Armagh and the province of Ulster, some faithful ministers, affected with the ignorance and desolations around them, associated for spreading the Gospel, and resolved to endeavour to rouse their fellows to a deeper sense of religious truth. They invited some brethren from England to go over and labour among them, as itinerants in the province of Ulster, and they were heard with the most awakened attention. Multitudes of papists attended their ministry in opposition to all the warnings of their priests, and vast congregations assembled wherever these faithful labourers travelled through the province.

A similar association was formed at Dublin, for the same purpose, hoping to diffuse the knowledge of a Saviour's grace among their benighted countrymen, and to turn their minds from the miserable distractions of politics, to the greater concerns of the salvation of immortal souls.

The other branches of the reformed Church in America, and on the Continent of Europe, claim a few additional remarks, and will bring the whole of this period to its close.

The first Methodist societies in the United States were formed in 1766, one in New York, and one in Frederick county Maryland. Societies having been afterwards formed in other places, some preachers were obtained from England, and others were raised up in America; all of whom laboured with success. Revivals of religion became frequent, the work spread extensively, and the infant church increased with great rapidity.

At the close of the American Revolution, which separated the United States from Great Britain, the preachers belonging to the American connexion, applied to Mr. Wesley for advice and assistance in reference to the plan they ought to adopt in becoming an independent church. This was but a few years prior to Mr. Wesley's death; and he evidently foresaw that the societies under his care both in Europe and America, would in time, be entirely independent of the English hierarchy, both for



ordination and ordinances. Under this conviction he acted, and the course he pursued, as well as his views in relation to it, will appear from his own words, contained in the following communication directed to his brethren in the United States:

“By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from the mother country, and erected into independent States. The English government has no authority over them, either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the states of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the provincial assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation, some thousands of the inhabitants of these states desire my advice; and in compliance with their desire I have drawn up a little sketch.

“Lord King’s account of the primitive church convinced me, many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling preachers; but I still have refused, not only for peace sake, but because I was determined, as little as possible, to violate the established order of the national church to which I belonged.

“But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither no parish ministers. So that for some hundred miles together, there is none either to baptise or administer the Lord’s supper. Here, therefore my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man’s right, by appointing and sending labourers into the harvest.

“I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America, also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord’s supper. And I have prepared a liturgy, little differing from that of the church of England, (I think the best constituted national church in the world,) which I advise all travelling preachers to use on the Lord’s day, in all the congregations, reading the litany on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days, I also advise the elders to administer the supper of the Lord on every Lord’s day.

“If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than I have taken.

“It has, indeed, been proposed to desire the English bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object, 1. I desired the bishop of London to ordain only one but could not prevail: 2. If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceeding; but the matter admits of no delay: 3. If they would ordain them now, they would likewise expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle them? 4. As our American brethren are now totally disentangled both from the state and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast, in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free.”

Thus it will be seen, that two persons were appointed as superintendents or bishops, and two as elders, with power to administer the sacraments. The General Conference which met in December, 1784, in Baltimore, unanimously confirmed what Mr. Wesley had done. Mr. Asbury was received as joint superintendent with Dr. Coke—the traveling preachers who were deemed eligible, were ordained—and in this manner was constituted the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.

The Presbyterian Church in the United States, was originally composed of a few strict Presbyterians from Scotland and Ireland, and some Congregationalists from New England and South Britain. These were scattered through the middle states for near half a century, with but few ministers and no bond of union, and in Virginia, oppressed by Episcopacy. The first Presbyterian Churches duly organised, were the first Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, and the Church at Snow Hill, in Maryland. Which of these is the oldest, it is difficult to determine. In 1704, the first Presbytery was organised. And in 1716 a Synod was formed, called the Synod of Philadelphia, New Castle, Snow Hill and Long Island. But in this body thus organised, there was not perfect harmony. The old Presbyterians were in favour of strict Presbyterianism, and were great advocates for a learned ministry. The Congregationalists cared but little about rigid forms, and were willing to receive men into the ministry eminently pious, though they might be without great learning. In 1720 the Synod passed the adopting measure, by which the Westminster Confession of faith was adopted as the standard of the Churches, and every minister was bound to subscribe to it on his own entrance into the ministry; but the Congregationalists were not cordial, in it, and



for many years contention ran high. The parties were called old side, and new lights.

The last were more attached to experimental religion than the old side, and when Mr. Whittfield went through the country, such was their attachment to him and his preaching, and such the aversion expressed by the old side, that a rent was made, and the Synod of New York was established by the new side, in opposition to the Synod of Philadelphia. The leading divines in this separation were the Tennents, Blairs, Dickinsons, Piersons, Woodbridge, Doctor Finley and Mr. Burr. The Thompsons, Dr. Allison, and Robert Cross headed the old side. But they were men in whom was the spirit of piety and love, and soon grew ashamed and weary of contention. In 1758 a union was happily formed, and the two Synods moved forward in much harmony. Gaining in strength and importance, they finally, in 1786, resolved, that the two Synods be divided into three or more Synods out of which shall be composed a General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. This Assembly was first convened in Philadelphia, in 1789.

The whole government of the Presbyterian Church is by Presbyterial judicatories, from the lowest, a session through Presbyteries of a second and third gradation to a fourth and last. Her doctrine and discipline are strictly Calvinistic. Her clergy have been pious, learned and active.

Though not strictly the founder of a sect, since he was a declared enemy of all separation from the English church, the name of John Hutchinson has excited too much attention to be entirely omitted in this history. He was born in 1674, and in the early part of his life, was steward to the duke of Somerset. He was undoubtedly a man of uncommon abilities, and of extensive knowledge. He applied himself, among other pursuits, assiduously to the study of nature, and is said to have collected in the course of his travels, that selection of fossils which was bequeathed by Dr. Woodward to the University of Cambridge.

In 1724, he published the first part of his *Moses's Principia*, in which he ridiculed Dr. Woodward's Theory of the Earth, and attacked the doctrine of gravitation, and other parts of the *Principia* of Newton. About three years afterwards he published a second volume, explaining the nature of the Scripture philosophy, and the system of Moses. The Hebrew language and the Holy Scripture he esteemed as the source of all knowledge human and divine: and wrote treatises fancifully illustrative of that language. But he was no admirer of classical literature. After Origin and other commentators, he asserted that the Scriptures were not to be understood in a literal, but in

an allegorical sense; that even the historical parts, and particularly those relating to the Jewish ceremonies, and levitical law, were to be considered in the same light. And he asserted, that according to this mode of interpretation, the Hebrew Scriptures would be found to testify amply concerning the nature and person of Christ.

The followers of Mr. Hutchinson have never been formed into a distinct church or society; but his doctrines have been embraced by considerable numbers both of the clergy and laity in England, who on that account, are distinguished by the appellation of Hutchinsonians.

The Sandemanians, or Glassites, as they are termed in Scotland, derive their name from two popular preachers in North Britian, Mr. John Glass, and Mr. Robert Sandeman. Their doctrine and discipline are said to be: 1. That justifying faith is no more than the simple belief of the truth, or the divine testimony passively received. 2. That this divine testimony carries in itself sufficient ground of hope and occasion of joy to every one who believes it, without any thing wrought in us, or done by us, to give it a particular direction to ourselves. 3. They constantly communiate together in the Lord's Supper every Sabbath: for they consider the Christian Sabbath as designed for the celebration of the divine ordinances, which are summarily comprised, Acts ii. 42-4. In the interval between the morning and afternoon service, they have their love-feasts; of which every member partakes by dining at the houses of such of their brethren as live sufficiently near, and whose habitations are convenient for that purpose. Their principal design in these feasts is, to cultivate mutual knowledge and friendship; to testify that they are all brethren of one family, and that the poor may be aided by the wealthy. At these love-feasts, and on the admission of a new member they use the kiss of charity, or the saluting each other with a holy kiss, which they believe to be a duty enjoined—Rom. xvi. 16. and in I. Cor. xvi. 20. They also practice washing each other's feet, for which they allege John xiii. 14. 15. They hold to a community of goods, so far, that every one among them is to consider his property liable to the calls of the poor and of the church. With excommunicated persons they hold it unlawful to eat or drink.

Mr. Sandeman came to New England, and established a society at Boston, and a few other places. He died at Danbury in 1771.

Some singular sects have arisen in America, within the course of this century. Of this class are the Dunkers, who formed themselves into a kind of commonwealth, mostly in a small town



called Euphrata, in Pennsylvania, where they live by their industry in a quiet and peaceable manner.

Their habits and mode of life are somewhat remarkable. The men wear their beards, dress generally in long garments, with a girdle around their waist, and a cap somewhat like the Dominican friars. The men and women have separate habitations, and distinct governments. For this purpose they have two large buildings; one of which is occupied by the brethren, and the other by the sisters of the society: and in each of them there is a banqueting room, and an apartment for public worship. The brethren and sisters do not meet together even at their devotions. They live chiefly on vegetable food; the rules of their society forbidding them the use of flesh except upon particular occasions, when they hold what is called a love-feast; at which they use some flesh. No member of the society is allowed a bed, but in cases of sickness. They have in their rooms benches on which to rest themselves, and blocks of wood for pillows. The Dunkers allow of no intercourse betwixt the brethren and sisters, not even by marriage. They seem to have obtained their name from their manner of baptizing their new converts, which is by immersion. The principal tenet of the Dunkers appears to be this: That future happiness is only to be obtained by penance and outward mortification in this life; and that as Jesus Christ, by his meritorious sufferings, became the Redeemer of mankind in general, so each individual of the human race, by a life of abstinence and restraint, may work out his own salvation. Nay, they go so far as to admit of works of supererogation; and declare, that a man may do much more than he is in justice and equity obliged to do, and that his superabundant works may therefore be applied to the salvation of others. They deny the eternity of future punishments, and believe that the souls of the just are employed to preach the gospel to those who have had no revelation in this life. They suppose the Jewish Sabbath, or sabbatical year, and year of jubilee, are typical of certain periods after the general judgment, in which the souls of those who are so far humbled as to acknowledge God and Christ, are received to felicity; while those who continue obstinate are reserved in torments until the grand period typified by the jubilee arrives, in which all shall be made eventually happy. They also deny the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity; and as they believe in the final salvation of all men, it is proper to consider them as Universalists. They declaim violence even in self-defence, and suffer themselves to be defrauded or wronged rather than go to law; on which account they have sometimes been called the harmless Dunkers.

The Swedenborgians owe their origin as a sect, to one of the most extraordinary men of modern times, the Hon. Emanuel Swedenborg. He was the son of Jasper Swedenborg, bishop of West Gotha. He appears to have had a complete education, his learning being extensive in almost every branch. At an early period of his life he became remarkable for his abilities at the court of Sweden. His first and favorite pursuit was natural science on which he published several valuable treatises. He was intimate with Charles XII. king of Sweden, who appointed him to the office of assessor to metallic college; in 1719, he was ennobled by queen Ulric Eleanora, and named Baron Swedenborg.

In 1743, he professed to have been favoured with a particular revelation, and a sight of the invisible world. From that period he devoted himself to theological studies, and composed a large number of books upon those subjects in good latin, (but without any ornaments of style) which he wrote with facility, and it is said that he seldom blotted or corrected a line. He lived and died in the Lutheran communion, but always spake favourably of the church of England, and exercised liberal principles towards others.

The theology he professed was abstruse and mystical. He carried his respect for the person and divinity of Christ to the highest degree of veneration, considering him as God manifested in the flesh. With respect to the Sacred Trinity, he admitted three distinct essences, principles, or characters, existing in it, and constituting the Divine Being. The virtue and efficacy of the atonement, by the passion and death of the man Christ Jesus, is considered by Baron Swedenborg, as not consisting in the change of disposition in God towards man from wrath to love and mercy; because that ever must be unchangeably the same; but in changing the state of man, by removing from him the powers of hell and darkness, wherewith he was manifested in consequence of transgression; and by bringing near to him the divine and heavenly powers of goodness and truth, in the person and spirit of Jesus Christ, the manifested God and Saviour, whereby the infirmities and corruptions of human nature might be wrought upon, and every penitent believer might enjoy divine favour. He asserted that the Holy Scriptures contained an internal and spiritual sense, to which the outward and literal sense serves as a basis or receptacle. Hence many of his illustrations are founded upon this figurative sense.

He was a strong asserter of the free agency of man; the practical morals which he recommended were of a pure kind, and we have reason to believe he practised them himself.

But the most extraordinary circumstance respecting this sin-



gular character, is the correspondence which he asserted he maintained with the world of spirits. Several parts of his writings are replete with narratives of scenes which he professes to have witnessed in the invisible regions. These he describes by expressions borrowed from the things of this world, which he asserts are only to be understood in a figurative sense, and as corresponding in some degree with those which he describes. These narratives have generally been ascribed to a partial derangement of his mental powers, but his followers believe them to be genuine revelations.

The societies of Swedenborg are numerous in Sweden and Germany, and have some establishments in England and America. Though they form independent societies in the United States, and have made attempts to do it in Europe, the admirers of the Baron disapprove of separating from the Lutheran church; because he was an enemy to such separation, and was, as they assert, desirous only of establishing an invisible church, or dominion of faith and virtue in the hearts of men, which they contend is the true interpretation of all that he has said concerning the new Jerusalem, or new church of Christ.

Not only did the Baron insist, that he himself had a familiar correspondence with the invisible world, but it is contended by his followers, both from his writings and from the Scriptures, that every man is in continual association with angels and spirits, and that without such association he could not think, or exert any living faculty. It is insisted further, that man, according to his life in this world, takes up his eternal abode, either with angels of light, or with spirits of darkness; with the former, if his life shall have been righteous before God, or with the latter, if through folly and wickedness, he shall be found to have rejected the counsels of the Most High.

The tenets of the Socinians made some progress during this century, especially among the dissenters in England. Under the name of Unitarians, (a name now generally preferred to that of Socinians) considerable numbers united in maintaining the unity of the Deity, the inferiority of Christ to the Father, though possessing in a high degree the Spirit and power of God.

The Unitarians believe the Scriptures to be faithful record of past transactions, but some of them are said to deny that the authors of the different books were divinely inspired. They agree with all Christians that Jesus of Nazareth was a divinely commissioned teacher of truth and righteousness; and that having been crucified by his enemies, he was raised from the dead on the third day. They regard it as a duty to believe whatever he is commissioned to teach. They believe in the resurrection

of the dead, both of the just and the unjust; and a subsequent state of retribution according to the deeds done in the body: but they reject the doctrine of eternal punishment. They believe Christ to have been a man, for the same reasons for which they believe the proper humanity of Moses and the prophets. And according to their system of doctrine, not only the divinity of Christ, but the distinct personal existence of the Holy Ghost, the doctrines of original sin, and of the atonement, fall to the ground. According to Dr. Priestly, the pardon of sin is dispensed solely on account of men's personal virtues, such as a penitent upright heart, and a reformed exemplary life; and without regard to the sufferings or merit of any being whatever. The Unitarians also reject the doctrine of an extraordinary divine influence upon the mind for moral and religious purposes; but they admit the beneficial efficacy of divine truth in regulating the affections and governing the life of every true Christian. Dr. Priestly says, that while he was an Arian, he became persuaded that the doctrine of the atonement was erroneous, and that there has been no supernatural influence, except for the purpose of miracles.

Some of the Unitarians deny the agency of the devil, and the doctrine of an intermediate state between death and the general resurrection. But they urge the importance of morality as necessary for the happiness and well-being of mankind in this life, and in that which is to come. They teach that Christianity requires the renunciation of every vice, and the practice of every virtue. Love is with them the fulfilment of the law, and the habitual practice of virtue from a principle of love to God, is, according to some of their best authors, the sum of true religion. They reject every thing in human creeds that has the character of mystery, or that surpasses the limits of our comprehension, as being irrational and not warranted by the Scriptures.

The doctrine which was supported by Origin and some of the fathers, concerning the final salvation of all men, in opposition to the prevailing belief in the eternity of future punishments, has also been revived with much zeal, and with some success, both in England and the United States. Those who advocate this doctrine, suppose that, as Christ died for all, so, before he shall have delivered up his mediatorial kingdom to the Father, he will bring all to participate in the benefits of his death. They teach that the wicked will receive a punishment in proportion to their crime: that punishment itself is a kind of mediatorial work, founded upon mercy, designed to humble the impenitent under a sense of their guilt, and reconcile them to God. They suppose that the words eternal, everlasting, &c. as



they are in some places applied to things which have ended, cannot be intended to mean endless when applied to future misery. It is contended by them, that this doctrine is most consonant with the perfections of the Deity, most worthy of the character of Christ, and that the Scriptures cannot in any other way be so easily reconciled.

The Shakers who originated in England about the year 1774, are a people of great singularity. Anna Lee, whom they styled the Elect Lady, was a conspicuous leader in this party. She was received and acknowledged among them as their first mother, or spiritual parent, in the female line, and the second heir in the covenant of life according to the present display of the gospel. In 1774, she, and a number of her followers, sailed from Liverpool for New York; and being joined by others after their arrival, they settled near Albany, where they have spread their opinions and increased to a considerable number. They have also several societies in the West.

The leading practical tenet is the abolition of marriage, and the entire separation of the sexes. They believe in human depravity, in the effusions of the Spirit, and assert that the day of judgment is past. They consider their testimony as a new dispensation, which they call Christ's second appearance. In their worship they practice a regular dance, to a hymn sung by the elders. They practice a community of goods, and hold that nothing short of this union in all things, both spiritual and temporal, can constitute a true church. On account of great exertions in dancing, their nerves sometimes become affected, and they have fits of shuddering or shaking, and hence have been called Shakers, and also Shaking Quakers.

The gigantic efforts of literary genius which so highly distinguished the seventeenth century, were not without their influence in this, and science continued to spread her rays rapidly and extensively over lands which had been long covered with the darkness and superstition of popery. From the constant advances of literature, the facility of multiplying books, and from other causes, the number of authors was greatly augmented. Our view of them must necessarily be brief and imperfect.

Among English writers, no one of his day wrote with greater beauty, or with more taste than Joseph Addison. His works, which are chiefly of the miscellaneous kind, will ever be read with interest, and his character as a Christian reflects much honour on the cause of true religion. His sentiments were excellent, his style highly finished, his talents as a poet were much admired, and deservedly celebrated.

Sir Richard Steel possessed a versatility of talents, extensive information, a deep acquaintance with polite literature, and was

an author of no ordinary rank. Several of his miscellaneous productions were highly applauded, his celebrity as a writer was very considerable, and probably would have been more so, if he had not been connected with so fine a writer as Addison.

James Saurin was an eloquent French theologian, and an eminent writer. Besides his voluminous and celebrated sermons, he published discourses, historical, critical and moral, upon the most memorable events of the Old and New Testaments, and several smaller works. Massillon was also an able and eloquent French divine, and a writer of eminence. As a powerful master of eloquence, his name has become almost proverbial. His works were published in fourteen volumes duodecimo.

Jonathan Edwards, president of Princeton College, in New Jersey, was a talented writer and eminent scholar. Richard Bently, president of Trinity College, Oxford, devoted his time and talents to the advancement of science, and was esteemed for eminent acquirements.

Dr. Berkly, bishop of Cloyne, wrote several valuable works, among which are, his theory of vision, principles of human knowledge, dialogues in opposition to sceptics and atheists, sermons, and the minute philosopher. As a scholar and philosopher, he possessed a high reputation. Pope and Swift may be considered among the first writers of the age in which they lived. The first was an excellent poet, and wrote on various subjects with great success. His writings on religious subjects were the least valuable of his works. His productions in poetry and prose were published in nine octavo volumes. Dean Swift was a poet of some talent, and a very extensive writer. His works have been published in fourteen volumes quarto, and twenty-five octavo, besides editions in other forms. He displayed much wit, and a taste for satire; but as a Christian, or a Christian minister, little can be said in his favour.

Oliver Goldsmith possessed great natural powers, well cultivated by good education, and his writings as a poet, but more particularly as a naturalist, entitle him to a respectable rank among the learned of his time. Hume, as an English historian, possessed considerable celebrity; but his principles on morality and religion have a most licentious tendency. A valuable history of Charles Fifth, a history of Scotland, also a history of America, and a dissertation concerning India, were productions of Dr. Robertson, president of the University of Edinburgh. The works of Dr. Prideaux prove him extensively skilled in oriental literature and Biblical criticism. Gray and Sterne were reputable authors, and highly esteemed by their contemporaries. Gray possessed the reputation of a scholar, and was



well versed in history, antiquities, criticism, morals and politics.

One of the best writers of this age, was Dr. Johnson. Though compelled to struggle with poverty, which obliged him to leave the University before he had completed his studies, and without receiving a degree, his gigantic efforts and ultimate success as a writer, procured for him the highest honors both from the University and the public. Among his works are a most valuable dictionary of the English language, and his lives of the poets. Buffon, a French philosopher, was celebrated as a naturalist, and his works are very voluminous. Gibbon wrote a full history of the decline of the Roman empire; a production of merit, but tarnished by his sarcasms upon Christianity, and by a kind of indecency which pervades the whole work. Though principally devoted to political life, Burke was highly esteemed on account of his literary attainments and for his elocution. As a polemical writer, Fletcher, of Madely, possessed extraordinary talents, and his works have been of immense service to the Christian world. His piety was almost without a parallel, exhibiting in a surprising manner the power and efficacy of divine grace. Drs. Beatty and Blair, wrote elegantly on subjects literary and religious. Their works have been, and doubtless will continue to be extensively useful. Among the works of the former, are a poem of the Minstrel, an essay on the nature and immutability of truth in opposition to sophistry and scepticism, elements of moral science, and evidences of the Christian religion; among those of the latter are, sermons on various subjects, and lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Letters.

To the foregoing names, many others might be added, such as, Young, Prior, Parnell, Rowe, Boileau, Bossuet, Fenelon, Watts, Bourdaloue, Fontenelle, Arbuthnot, Congreve, S. Clarke, Franklin, Rittenhouse, Ramsay, and Rush; all of whom have been more or less distinguished for their attainments and useful productions.

## CHAPTER XX.

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### NINETEENTH CENTURY.

#### GENERAL STATE OF THE CHURCH—REVIVALS—NEW SECTARIES—MISSIONS.

WE have seen in the preceding century a considerable decline of the Papal power, large communities of Protestants effectually emancipated from its dominion, an increase of learning and liberal principles, and in spite of Infidelity, an extraordinary revival of evangelical religion. This revival, which was the fruit of itinerant labours, was attended with renovating effects among various religious societies, and the fruit of it is still visible both in Europe and America.

Most of the national churches in Europe have continued under forms of government so nearly the same as in the last century, that it is unnecessary to mention them in detail. Some of these churches have been much revived, and are exerting a powerful influence in the cause of truth. Some are making but moderate efforts, and others are apparently in a state of inactivity.

The union of these churches with the civil power, though considered by some as being essential to their prosperity, is perhaps, their greatest evil. It has indeed a tendency to give them popularity and pecuniary support; but it seems invariably hostile to their spiritual interests. The measure appears to have been adopted for the benefit of the government, rather than for that of the church. It is well known that the influence of religion, even if it be a religion of mere forms and ceremonies, is often effectual in awing the ignorant into submission to the civil authority, be that authority of what kind it may. And when rulers have perceived that ecclesiastical influence is an important auxiliary to civil power, they have deemed it good policy to establish and preserve a connexion so advantageous. But experience has amply shown, that though the State may derive advantage from such connexions, the interests of religion are far from being promoted.



It is impossible for a civil government, in forming such a union, to give all denominations of Christians equal advantages; it must give some one of them the preference over all the rest. And the one thus preferred, while sustained by the arm of national power and patronage, is liable to lose sight of its dependence upon the Great Head of the church; and relapsing into formality and the spirit of the world, to become indifferent, if not averse to the essentials of evangelical religion. It is to be feared that this is the present situation of some of the European churches.

In France, however, by another extraordinary revolution, the national establishment of the Romish church has been overthrown, and all Christian denominations are allowed equal privileges. The new state of things, so favourable to religious liberty and the Protestant cause, seems likely to be attended with much good. But the deep rooted infidelity on one hand, and blind superstition on the other, which so much abound in that kingdom, will be strong barriers against the spread of genuine piety.

The rights of conscience are better understood in most of the European kingdoms than they formerly were, and religious toleration is extended to all classes of Christians, except in Spain Portugal and Italy. The numerous dissenting churches are required to do their full proportion towards supporting the national church; but they are permitted to build themselves houses for public worship, at their own expense, and worship according to their faith. Formerly, those who refused to subscribe to the established creed were considered as being abandoned to heresy and misery; but it is a pleasing reflection, that this opinion is giving place to more enlightened views. The darkness of ignorance and superstition has in some measure passed away, and the true light is extending its rays among the nations. The Protestant dissenters constitute a large and respectable proportion of the Christian community in Europe, and are distinguished for their zeal in the cause of religion. Unencumbered by state patronage, and relying for and upon a superior power, some of them have been made more active and successful in the great work of spreading the gospel, than the established churches; and there is evidently more vital and practical religion among them, than is manifested among the others.

In the United States, the churches are in prosperity, and the state of religion is encouraging. Here we have no national church, nor is it intended there shall be. The framers of our constitution seem to have believed that a union of Church and State was never originally intended by the author of Christianity. Though they had examples of it before them, in almost

all the governments of the Eastern world, they could perceive no one of them attended with consequences of such a nature as to warrant them in attempting a similar plan. They aimed at the permanent establishment, not of a national church, but of civil and religious liberty, and the security of the rights of conscience to all classes of citizens. They believed that religion would flourish best when unencumbered by legal efforts to direct its course, and that legislating upon it would have no other considerable effect than to check its progress. They, therefore, left it where they found it, independent of human power, and resting upon its own eternal foundation. The experiment, if it be one, proves thus far, that they acted wisely. Religion is not made an auxiliary to tyranny and oppression, nor is it banished from the country. It flourishes in every state in the union, with increasing attention, and evidently with more practical success than in any of the European kingdoms.—It has been alleged, that the want of a national church in the United States is the cause of so great a number of different sects. To be convinced that this is an entire mistake, it is only necessary to consider, that almost every denomination of Christians in America originated in Europe, which now contains more sects than there are on this side of the Atlantic.

Under the enlightened policy that has been adopted in this country in reference to religion, the spread of it, since the commencement of the nineteenth century, has been wonderful, and in no age or country, since the reformation has so many and such glorious revivals of religion been experienced, as in these U. S. from the commencement of this century to the present time. Extraordinary success attends the preaching of the gospel, and tens of thousands are annually added to the churches. An energy and active zeal prevails to an extent almost unknown in former ages of the Christian world. Scepticism has its votaries, and licentiousness is prevalent; but amidst these and other discouragements, Zion prospers, and the cause of truth is rapidly advancing.

The prevailing doctrines of the church are, with few exceptions, the same that they formerly were. The different sects in Europe and America maintain their own peculiar tenets, but most of them agree in the essential doctrines of Christianity. The doctrines of the Trinity, of human depravity, the new birth, and salvation by faith in Christ, are received by most, if not all denominations, except the Universalists and Unitarians. The controverted articles on predestination and particular redemption, as expressed in the Westminster Confession of Faith, still have their advocates, and are still subjects of controversy; but they appear to be less strenuously advocated than formerly,



and seem in many instances to be giving place to the more popular doctrines of general redemption and free-will. The doctrines of the Westminster creed are received and advocated by the Calvinistic churches on both sides of the Atlantic; while the other doctrines are supported by the Lutherans, by most of the Episcopalians, Cumberland Presbyterians, also by the Wesleyan Methodists, and by other bodies of Christians.

The churches in Asia have been long in a languishing condition, owing to the oppressive governments under which they have lived. Surrounded by Mahometans and Pagans, and persecuted by the most cruel despotism, it was impossible that they should flourish as they might be expected to do under more favourable circumstances. They have, nevertheless, held fast their profession, and stood as lights twinkling amidst the prevailing darkness. They still number several millions, scattered in different provinces, chiefly in the Turkish dominions, and constitute an important part of the General Church. Under the auspices of missionary labours, and by the blessing of the Great Head of the church, it is to be hoped that the darkness which has for ages overspread this grand division of the globe, will pass away, and be succeeded by a glorious dawn.

The Haldanites, a new sect in religion have been always and every where spoken against, and the name of their leader has been contemptuously fixed upon them. What was at first reproachful, often continues after reproach has ceased, and is found convenient as a term of distinction, though perhaps no man was ever so averse to such names as the person to whom the term *Haldanite* refers. We know not of any proper distinctive appellation for those we mean to give some account of, else it would have been substituted for that which is so objectionable to themselves.

In giving some account of those called Haldanites it is necessary to take notice of the gentleman whose name has been applied to them. About the first of this century, Robert Haldan, Esq., then of Aithrie, near Stirling, in Scotland, and his brother, J. Haldan, both received serious impressions of the importance of religion, and soon after resolved upon going to the East Indies to plant a Christian colony. With this view Mr. Robert Haldan, the elder brother, sold his beautiful family estate of Aithrie, and procured the consent of the Rev. Greville Ewing, then one of the ministers of Lady Glenorchy's chapel, Edinburgh; of the Rev. William Innes, then one of the ministers of Stirling; and of the Rev. David Bogue, of Gosport, to accompany him. Mr. Ewing and Mr. Innes had both resigned their office in the establishment, and all necessary arrangements were made for their departure, but the East India Company re-

fused their permission. Prevented from carrying his first design into execution, Mr. Halden now turned his attention towards home, erected a large building for religious worship in Edinburgh, called *the Tabernacle*, capable of containing three thousand people, purchased a place built for a circus in Glasgow, of nearly the same size, which he converted to the same purpose, and erected a Tabernacle in Dundee, of nearly the same dimensions. Both he and his brother had already become preachers, but himself was obliged to desist on account of bursting a blood-vessel. Mr. James Haldan was stationed at Edinburgh, Mr. Ewing at Glasgow, and Mr. Innes at Dundee. Hitherto they considered themselves on terms of communion with the Established church, but all connexion of this kind was soon broken off. Churches were formed at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, &c., after the model of the English Independents, and a number of young men were collected and placed under the tuition of Messrs. Ewing and Innes for the ministry.

These were educated and sent out—places of worship were built in many towns and villages in Scotland—and missionaries were employed from England, at the sole expense of Mr. Haldan. The new sect had already made a progress similar to that of the Methodists in England, but it was more rapid than lasting. All the new-formed churches soon began to approximate to the faith and discipline of the Scotch Independents, commonly called David Dale's people—to the Scotch Baptists, commonly called Maclean's people, and to the Glassites. These three denominations are, in faith and discipline, very similar. Their creed is Calvinism, somewhat refined indeed, for they have long been accused of heresy by their Calvinistic brethren on both sides of the Tweed. They deny that scripture is a dead letter; that Jesus is the eternal Son of God; that there are any mysteries, in the popular acceptance of the word, or mystical sense, or diverse meanings, in the text of scripture; they assert that faith is merely credence which is produced by evidence, and that the Holy Spirit never operates, but according to and by the written word. They pay much attention to the scriptures, but little regard to human theological compositions. They believe that the New Testament contains a perfect plan of church government; that every church ought to have a plurality of elders, chosen out of itself, that the Lord's Supper is to be observed every day of the week; that the brethren ought to sit down together on the same day to the love-feast, and salute one another with a holy kiss, according to the apostolic commandment; that contribution is to be made for the poor brethren, all of whom are to be liberally provided for; that none shall be admitted into their fellowship but by the



consent of the whole body; and that offenders, whether against a brother, or against the faith, or against morality, shall be dealt with first privately, and then publicly, that they may come to repentance, but being obstinate must be put away.

This scheme of church order has never been popular in Scotland, though it rather gains ground. The Haldanites soon fell in with it, especially with respect to a plurality of elders, and the duty of the brethren to exhort one another. Every thing clerical was considered objectionable; as the term *reverend*, or even minister; the wearing of black in preference to any other colour; a connected, well-composed sermon in preference to a plain exhortation to duty, or exposition of scripture, by comparing spiritual things with spiritual. All this rendered them abundantly unpopular; besides which, they became Baptists, and it is well known that many people have great aversion to baptism in the form of immersion. Those called Haldanites having passed through many changes, cannot now be distinguished from the old Scotch Baptists.

Mr. Ewing, Mr. Wardlaw of Glasgow, Mr. Aikin of Edinburgh, continue on the plan of English Independents, and are attended by numerous congregations.

The title of *Freethinking Christians* is one applied to a society which has regularly assembled together in the heart of the city of London, since the year 1799, as a church of God, and as the disciples of Jesus, acknowledging no other laws for their government as a church, and no other doctrines as matters of the Christian faith, than those which they apprehend to have been promulgated and taught by Jesus and his apostles, of which they consider the writings of the New Testament the only authentic records.

The first members of this church had been previously members of the church meeting at Parliament-court Chapel, Bishopgate-street at that time Universalists, and holding the doctrine of the Trinity—now Unitarians. It happened that an individual of that church became convinced of the truth of the doctrine of the divine unity—this conviction extended to others. These men having embraced what appeared to them an important truth, felt it their duty to submit it to their brethren, and to press its evidences on every suitable occasion on their attention. It will easily be imagined that, as the church was Trinitarian—as the congregation was Trinitarian, and consequently the pastor Trinitarian, that he, the pastor, would be first to oppose the growing heresy among his flock, and to designate its teachers as the enemies of the Son of God.

With pain and reluctance, therefore, they felt it their duty to separate from a church in which, on account of the radical

nature of its constitution, as fixing the opinions to be believed by its members, and maintaining a distinct and individual teacher of these opinions, it appeared to them impossible for the strong and growing limbs of free inquiry to walk unfettered and uncontrolled; for when they found themselves in error on a point of so much importance as that of the unity of God, it occurred to them that there might still be many truths which they had yet to learn, many errors which they had yet to abandon.

Accordingly, on November 18, 1798, the members dissenting from the church of Parliament Court, assembled together at the house of one of the Friends, and drew up the declaration, setting forth the grounds and reasons of their separation from that church. This declaration, though important, is too long to be submitted to our readers; it contains, generally, the motives and reasons of their conduct, and concludes in these words: "Thus having, in the integrity of our souls, set forth our reasons, we trust we can appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that we separate from our brethren in Parliament-court in love; and we earnestly pray, that the Father of all goodness, and the God of all grace, will be pleased to lead both them and us into the perfect knowledge of his will, and enable us cheerfully to do it, that we may at last meet joyfully and acceptably in the kingdom of Jesus, and have part therein."

The first business of the separatists was to examine the writings of the New Testament, and to trace out the directions given by the servants of Jesus to the primitive associations of his followers, in order to ascertain the nature, the constitution, and the laws of the Christian church, that they might assimilate themselves thereto. This work formed the labour of the first year of their existence as a distinct body, and was published in a small pamphlet in 1800. It contains the then views of the society on church discipline and organization; and though their opinions, as we shall see, on many doctrinal and ceremonial parts of Christianity, are now by no means the same as at that period, yet on this subject they seem rather to be strengthened and confirmed, than altered by time and subsequent research.

They consider the church of God to be an assembly of men, believing the truth of Christianity, and united in the bonds of fellowship, under the authority of Jesus as their sovereign and their head, by the appointment of God.

They consider that Christians are not called upon to legislate for themselves, but that Jesus gave laws, and laid down principles, either himself or his apostles, for the government of his kingdom; that the apostles were fully instructed in all things



pertaining thereto, and that their directions to the first assemblies should be the rule of their discipline, as a body, in all cases where they were not manifestly local and limited by circumstances.

They consider the unity of the church one of its principal characteristics, and that the design of Jesus was to unite his followers in one vast family; so that however scattered its members might be over the earth—however separated by worldly pursuits—however divided by mountains and seas, they should be all one in him, by acknowledging the same authority, by being subjects of the same laws, and by a mutual connexion and reciprocal communication with each other.

They consider the equality of the members of the Christian church to be the distinguished feature of the kingdom of Jesus, from all the kingdoms of the earth, and as the true ground and security of their Christian liberty. As a consequence of this principle, all power and dominion rests in the church; all who bear sway and hold particular offices therein exist by its appointment, and are subject to its control.

Their officers are, first, an elder, whose business is to preside at their public assemblies, to regulate their private meetings, to preserve order, to attend especially to the wants and spiritual concerns of the church. The elder is elected by ballot, and the better to secure the liberties of the church, and to guard against the effects of power, he is elected only for three months, and remains ineligible to office till after the expiration of another three months.

Secondly, Two deacons, to assist the elder in the execution of the laws, in the despatch of business, in providing for the convenience, and attending to the civil concerns of the church: the deacons are subject to the same laws of appointment to office with the elder. With the right of electing to office, the liberty and privilege of teaching belongs alike to all, and is considered to flow from the equality of all! In this church, then, there is no hired, no especial teacher; every man, if he feels he has the ability, knows he has the right of giving a word of exhortation to his brethren, might teach one by one, that all might learn, and all might be comforted.

The ground of fellowship with this church is the admission of the authority of Jesus as a divine teacher, and of his resurrection as establishing the truth of his mission;—this admitted, virtue, and not opinion, is the bond of union. No other sentiment is required to be acknowledged by persons proposing themselves for membership, than that which gives them the name and character of Christians.

Since the first meeting of this society as a distinct body, their sentiments have undergone a considerable alteration on many matters of vital importance, connected with the doctrines of Christianity—and they make this their pride and their boast. They contend, that it was the natural consequence of free inquiry, and that men who had been heretofore the slaves of error, could not but advance in the attainment of truth, when united in a system, which left thought unrestrained, and conscience free. They say their opinions have been the result of examination, investigation, and unfettered discussion: they say, they owe what they esteem to be their enlightened views of Christianity, to the free spirit of their constitution, without which they would still have been but children in the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord. Not that they would declare themselves, in the language of bigotted confidence, totally free from error: they only assert, that their wish is to be so; and that they will readily renounce any opinion they may call their own, whenever it shall appear to them false and untenable. They have long since rejected the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the last and most important practice which they have given up, is public social worship. In their assemblies they have neither singing nor prayer; they consider the worship of the Christian should be the worship of the heart, and his prayers the prayers of the closet, agreeable to the express directions of Jesus to his disciples, and to the pure and retiring spirit of his religion. The effect of their inquiries has been to make them decided advocates for the unity of the Deity, and the simple humanity of Jesus; but the doctrines of the atonement, of original sin, of election, and reprobation, of the eternal punishment of the wicked, of the existence of bad or good angels, of the immateriality and immortality of the soul, they generally reject; the supposed inspiration of the Bible, as a book, they likewise reject, though the origin of revelation, as attested by miracles, and the genuineness and authenticity of the several writings composing the bible, and developing the history of the communication of God with his creature man, they believe to be established beyond the reach of rational doubt, or enlightened scepticism. Their view of the Christian religion is briefly this: that it consists in the worship and reverence of one God, eternal, just, and good, and in an obedience to the commands of Jesus, his messenger on earth, who taught the wicked to repent of the error of their ways, and that God was ever ready to receive them: that forms and ordinances, parade and show, were no parts of his system; but that virtue and purity of heart can alone prepare man for a blissful existence beyond the grave, the evidence and the hope



of which was furnished by the resurrection of the teacher of their faith, a member of earth, and an heir of mortality.

For some years this society existed almost unnoticed and unknown; they corresponded with several churches whom they considered the most enlightened, but, happily as they esteem it, for their own improvement, they united with none. They had now examined, as they apprehended, every important subject connected with Christianity; they admired the beauty and simplicity of the Christian religion; they felt grateful to the Father of mercies, that they had come to the perfect knowledge of the Son of God, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, and they were anxious to extend their advantages to others. Accordingly they advertised in one of the Sunday papers, their intention of publicly inquiring into the existence of a being called the *Devil*, and by way of drawing attention to their advertisement, designated themselves *Free-thinking Christians*. Numbers flocked to their meeting. The landlord of the place was alarmed, at what he had reason to fear might be the consequences to himself; they were obliged to quit the room in which they had assembled for eight years. They engaged another. They were still followed by the multitude; and now they appeared to have excited ecclesiastical alarm.

At their meetings, doctrinal, moral, and scriptural subjects are chosen for public instruction; there is the utmost simplicity and familiarity in their form and manner. The elder opens the business by stating the subject, and at his call several speakers, the one after the other, address the church and audience assembled. It is not unusual to hear amongst them a difference of opinion, which they express without the least hesitation, considering that truth is engendered by the sentiment, and that no sensible mind can be otherwise than pleased at every attempt to correct what another may esteem its error. This exercise generally occupies about an hour and a half, and the business is concluded by the elder. The speakers in their discourses take frequent occasions to controvert the opinions of the Christian world in general, and to show their ground of dissent from all sects and parties; nor are they at all sparing with their censures on the priesthood, which, under all its modifications and refinements, they consider opposed, both in theory and application, to the best principles of the Christian church, inimical to the purity of the gospel, inconsistent with the advancement of the mind, and unfriendly to the interests of truth.

The number of Free-thinking Christians is fast increasing; in 1810, they were enabled to build a respectable meeting-house in the Crescent, Jewin-street, Aldersgate-street, where

they regularly address an assembly consisting of between four and five hundred persons: their present meetings are on the Sunday mornings only.

This account of the Freethinking Christians was written by one of their number. The intelligent evangelical Christian will at once perceive that they are deists, who have put on the garb of Christianity, and assumed its name, while they endeavour to sap its foundation.

“The mission of *Joanna Southcott* commenced in the year 1792, and the number of people who have joined with her from that period to the present time, as believing her to be divinely inspired, is considerable. It is asserted that she is the instrument, under the direction of Christ, to announce the establishment of his kingdom on earth, as a fulfilment of all the promises in the scriptures, and that prayer which he himself gave to his followers; and more particularly of the promise made to the woman in the fall, through which the human race is to be redeemed from all the effects of it in the end. We are taught by the communication of the spirit of truth to her, that the seven days of creation were types of the two periods in which the reign of Satan and of Christ are to be proved and contrasted. Satan was conditionally to have his reign tried for six thousand years, shadowed by the six days in which the Lord worked, as his spirit has striven with man while under the powers of darkness; but Satan’s reign is to be shortened, for the sake of the elect, as declared in the gospel; and Satan is to have further trial at the expiration of the thousand years, for a time equal to the number of days shortened. At the close of the seven thousand years the judgment is to take place, and the whole human race will collectively bring forward the testimony of the evil they suffered under Satan, and of the good they enjoyed under the Spiritual reign of Christ. These two testimonies will be evidence before the whole creation of God, that the pride of Satan was the cause of his rebellion in heaven, and that he was the root of evil upon earth; and consequently when those two great proofs have been brought forward, that part of the human race that has fallen under his power, to be tormented by being in the society of Satan and angels, will revolt from him in that great day—will mourn that they have been deluded—will repent—and the Saviour of all will hold out his hand to them in mercy—and will then prepare a new earth for them to work righteousness, and prepare them ultimately to join his saints, who have fought the good fight in this world, while under the reign of Satan.

“The mission of *Joanna* is to be accomplished by a perfect obedience to the spirit that directs her, and so to be made to



claim the promise of "bruising the head of the serpent;" and which promise was made to the woman on her casting the blame upon Satan, whom she unwittingly obeyed, and thus man became dead to the knowledge of good; and so he blamed his Creator for giving him the woman, who was pronounced his helpmate for good. To fulfil the attribute of justice, Christ took upon himself that blame, and assumed his humanity to suffer on the cross for it, that he might justly bring the cross upon Satan, and rid him from the earth, and then complete the creation of man, so as to be after his own image. It is declared that "the seed of the woman" are those who in faith shall join with her in claiming the promise made in the fall; and they are to subscribe with their own hands unto the Lord that they do thus join with her, praying for the destruction of the powers of darkness, and for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ! Those who thus come forward in this spiritual war, are to have the seal of the Lord's protection; and if they remain faithful soldiers, death and hell shall not have power over them: and these are to make up the sealed number of one hundred and forty-four thousand to stand with the Lamb on Mount Sion! The fall of Satan's kingdom will be a second deluge over the whole earth; so that from having brought the human race under his power, a great part of them will fall with him, for the Lord will pluck out of his kingdom all that offend and do wickedly. The voice which announces the coming of the Messiah is accompanied with judgments, and the nations must be shaken and brought low before they will lay these things to heart. When all these things are accomplished, then the desire of nations will come in glory, so that "every eye shall see Him," and he will give his kingdom to his saints!

"It is represented, that in the Bible is recorded every event by which the Deity will work the ultimate happiness of the human race; but that the plan is for the most part represented by types and shadows, and otherwise so wrapt up in mysteries, as to be inscrutable to human wisdom. As the Lord pronounced that man should become dead to knowledge if he ate the forbidden fruit, so the Lord must prove his words true. He therefore selected a peculiar people as depositaries of the records of that knowledge; and he appeared among them, and they proved themselves dead to every knowledge of him, by crucifying him. He will, in like manner, put the wild-olive to the same test; and the result will be, that he will now be crucified in the spirit!

"The mission of Joanna began in 1792, at which time she had prophecies given her, showing how the whole was to be accomplished. Among other things, the Lord said he should

visit the surrounding nations with various calamities for fifteen years, as a warning to *this* land, (England) and that then he should bring about events here, which should more clearly manifest the truth of her mission, by judgments and otherwise: so that this should be the happy nation to be first redeemed from its troubles, and be the instrument for awakening the rest of the world to a sense of what is coming upon all, and for destroying *the Beast*, and those who worship his image!"

Since the publication of the above, Joanna Southcott died of a protracted illness. It was given out that she was to be the mother of a *Second Shiloh*. Presents were accordingly made her for the *Babe*, especially a superb cradle, with an Hebrew inscription in poetry! But she expired, and no child appeared on the occasion. A stone placed over her remains in the New Burial-ground, Mary-le-bone, has this mystic inscription:—

In Memory of  
JOANNA SOUTHCOTT,  
who departed this life December 27th, 1814,  
Aged 60 Years.

While through all thy wond'rous days  
Heaven and earth enraptured gaze,  
While vain sages think they know  
Secrets thou alone canst show,  
Time alone will tell what hour  
Thou'lt appear in greater power!

Similar in extravagance were the lines put on the stone of Ludovick Muggleton a journeyman taylor, who set up for a prophet in the time of Cromwell. He and his companion Reeves absolved and condemned whom they pleased, saying, they were the *two last witnesses* spoken of in Revelations, who were to appear before the destruction of the world! He was buried in spinning-wheel-Alley, Moorfields, dying March 14, 1697, in the 88th year of his age. The inscription ran thus:—

Whilst mausoleums and large inscriptions give  
Might, splendour, and past death makes potent live,  
It is enough to write thy name—  
Succeeding times by that will read thy fame:  
Thy deeds—thy acts—around the world resound,  
No foreign soil where Muggleton's not found!

We have been down to the burial ground, and no memorial remains; the ravan plume of oblivion hath long ago waved over the prophet's grave!\*

Equally evanescent were the *Fifth Monarchy Men* in the days of Cromwell. The Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian,

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\* Author of the Sketch—a valuable work on the different sectaries, published in London, and from which the whole of this article has been copied.



and the Roman were the four great monarchies; and these men believing the spiritual kingdom of Christ made the *Fifth*, came to bear the name by which they were distinguished. They aimed at the subversion of all human government. The Mugletonians and Fifth Monarchy Men, are now only casually mentioned in the History of England.

In the year 1815, several clergymen, who had been personally acquainted with each other, and had occasionally laboured together in the work of religious instruction (without any communication on the particular subject of the services of the Church of England) were much pained by a conviction that some of those services in which they were engaged were contradictory to the injunctions and the character of the religion of Jesus Christ. The Baptismal service particularly appeared to them, as substituting a ritual observance in the place of a spiritual and divine operation, and to be peculiarly objectionable. The Chatechism, as connected with the Baptismal service, and the Burial service as continuing on a delusion, by still denominating every individual a Christian, on the ground of a merely external association, were likewise objected against. The Athanasian Creed also, with some, though not with all, especially in its damnatory clause, as contradictory to the simple declaration "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved;" as well as too assuming by far in its judgment.

The constitution of the Church of England had also appeared to them as radically bad, from the circumstance of its connection with the state, and its consequent obligations to have its teachers in spiritual things appointed by persons who might be themselves wholly under the influence of carnal principles.

The daily use, however, of services which they considered as denying the declarations of God's word was so oppressive, and, in their esteem, so guilty, that their obligation to it may be considered as the direct cause of their secession: and when, at length, they communicated their feelings to each other, it is more than probable that the objections in the mind of each were increased in numbers as well as weight.

In the autumn of 1815 they agreed to meet together, to enquire more fully into the nature of each other's difficulties, and their obligations, by virtue of their subscription, at the time of ordination and induction. After some consideration, they agreed that it was not consistent with Christian integrity to continue the use of religious services which appeared to them to be in contradistinction to the word of God, and that they were bound to rescind their own declaration, that they could ex animo, assent to the whole of the contents of the thirty-nine articles, and the book of homilies, and the contents of the book of com-

mon pray, as containing nothing contrary to the word of God.' After this they waited not many weeks before they tendered the resignation of their livings or cures to their respective Bishops, which they did, as became them, in the most respectful manner in their power; and it must be allowed by all fair witnesses, that very little expression of disrespect, much less of bitterness, can be proved upon any of these persons in their observations on the establishment.

After the Seceders had left their original connexions and their preferments, which common sense must teach they had not done without many a severe struggle, they went into the neighbourhood of Taunton, and exercised their ministry in that town and in the adjacent villages for nearly a year; during which time they constantly met together, and endeavoured to come to some conclusion as to the course which they ought to adopt. They were not desirous of uniting hastily with any of the various religious denominations; and the charge of Antinomianism which was pretty generally made against their doctrinal statements, made most of the various religious denominations as willing to avoid them.

They were at this time in a very peculiar situation: their sacrifices and their general conduct seemed to demand respect; but on the other hand, it was feared that their views were crude and dangerous, being formed upon a partial consideration of the sacred volume; and their apparent opposition to all parties made them liable to much obliquy from various quarters.

It is certain that their principal subject, in all their discourses was that of a sinner's justification before God, which they affirmed in the strongest manner, and sometimes in rather uncouth terms that this was by *faith only* through the propitiation which was by Jesus Christ! If they did not, on their leaving the church, sufficiently enlarge on the effects of faith, those who continue to preach acknowledge themselves most sincerely to have been in error in this respect; and it was because they considered that if the principles of obedience were implanted, there was little necessity for enlarging upon the nature of the obedience itself. But in their intercourse with those who seemed to receive their doctrines, they are said to have been less defective in practical admonitions than in their sermons. They themselves, in the strongest terms, expressed at all times their abhorrence of practical Antinomianism; and if a reply by Mr. Snow, of Cheltenham, to a pamphlet written by a Mr. Simmons, may be considered as a representation of the sentiments of the rest of the Seceders, Antinomianism is certainly no more chargeable on them than on those bodies in general, who hold *justification by faith only* with a very strong hand.



The Seceders have by this time, we suspect, learned to moderate their statements. Some have gone abroad, some continue to preach, having large chapels at London, Bristol, Brighton, Exeter, Taunton, Cheltenham, and some smaller ones in various parts of Wiltshire, Hampshire, and Dorsetshire. They have never appeared to have any rules for uniting them together and for advancing their interest as a body. Whether certain peculiarities of opinion, in which they are now said to be more agreed among themselves than formerly, may ever occasion them to augment the number of their followers, and assume a more prominent position in the ranks of the various religious bodies, time must determine.

There are still some difference in their forms of worship, some contending for communion on the terms of the strict Baptists, and for the visible separation of members of the Church from others at the time of worship; others adopting the more general plan of admitting *all* that profess faith to their communion, and agreeing in the common mode of public worship. All are in some degree tainted with what is termed Sandemanianism, as they break bread and have a collection for the saints on the first day of the week. Their views on many doctrines differ from those which are called orthodox. They do not hold the doctrine of the Trinity as it is commonly maintained, neither do they confound the persons of the Father and Son, as the Sabellians. Mr. Bevan's treatise of "God in Christ," and Mr. Evans's "Dialogues on the Trinity," are the only two publications which have yet appeared expressing their views on this solemn subject. As these are not published with the intention of expressing the creed of a body, but of individuals, it would be unfair to affix all the contents of those works on any others than the authors themselves. It is plain that they believe Christ to have existed with God before all things; that the appellations ascribed to the Supreme are given to him,—that he is the object of religious worship,—that by *his blood* all believers are *justified* from all things,—that he is the Lord and Governor of all things in heaven and in earth, the prophet, priest, and king of the Church!

They hold the doctrine of the Atonement in the strongest manner, but do not distinguish between the active and passive obedience of Christ, considering justification to consist only in the remission of all sin. They believe faith to be the giving of credit to the divine testimony, and in this respect are like the Sandemanians. They maintain the absolute necessity of the influence of the holy spirit of God, but suppose its operation to be by the means of the revealed truth of God reaching the heart through the medium of the understanding.

They differ from the High Calvinists altogether in their mode of preaching, which is principally intended for the instruction and conversion of those whom they consider to be still of the world.

They maintain the doctrine of personal and individual sanctification, contrary to what has been charged on them, as will particularly appear by Mr. Snow's "Reply" to Mr. Simmons, (sold at Ogle's) together with his "Sermons on the Death of the Princess Charlotte," and by a sermon of Mr. Evans's.

The seceders believe in the doctrine of election, but do not make it a very prominent subject in their discourses, and appear to the high Calvinists to contradict themselves on this subject, by the general invitations which they make to all men!

It must be here added that Mr. Snow of Cheltenham, once an actor, has confessed his errors, and returned to the church of England; whilst Mr. Evans of Gray's-inn lane, has, though still a dissenter, reverted back to the belief of the Trinity. He has published a "Series of Letters" on the subject, bitterly lamenting his temporary heterodoxy; and by way of reparation, endeavoring to set right the various erring classes of the religious world.

The Sauds are a newly discovered Indian sect, resembling the Quakers. "In March, 1816, (says the reporter of the Calcutta committee of the Church Missionary Society) I went with two gentlemen from Futtehgurh, on the invitation of the Principal persons of the Saud sect, to witness an assemblage of them for the purpose of religious worship, in the city of Farrukhabad, the general meeting of the sect being that year in that city. The assembly took place in the court-yard of a large house: the number of men, women, and children were considerable. We were received with great attention, and chairs were placed for us in the front of the hall. After some time, when the place was quite full of people, the worship commenced. It consisted solely in the chaunting of a hymn, this being the only mode of public worship used by the Sauds! At subsequent periods I made particular inquiries relative to the religious opinions and practices of this sect, and was frequently visited by Bhuwance Dos, the principal person of the sect in the city of Furrukhabad. The following is the substance of the account given by Bhuwance Dos, of the organ of this sect:—

"About the Sumbat year 1600, or 177 years ago, a person named Beerbhan, an inhabitant of Beejbasur near Narraul, in the province of Delhi, received a miraculous communion from Ooda Dos, teaching him the particulars of the religion now professed by the Sauds. Ooda Dos at the same time gave to Beerbhan marks by which he might know him on his re appearance.



1. That whatever he foretold should happen: 2. That no shadow should be cast from his figure; 3. That he would tell him his thoughts; 4. That he would be suspended between heaven and earth; 5. That he would bring the dead to life! Bhuwance Dos presented me with a copy of the Pot-hee, or religious books of the Sauds, written in a kind of verse, in the tenth Hindec dialect; and he fully explained to me the leading points of their religion. The Sauds utterly reject and abhor all kinds of idolatry, and the Ganges is considered by them with no greater veneration than by Christians, although the converts are made chiefly, if not entirely, from among the Hindoos, whom they resemble in outward appearance. Their name for God is *Stulgur*; and Saud, the appellation of the sect, means *Servant of God*! They are pure deists, and their form of worship is most simple, as I have already stated. They resemble the Quakers in their customs in a remarkable degree. Ornaments and gay apparel of every kind are strictly prohibited. Their dress is always white. They never make any obeisance or salam. They will not take an oath, and they are exempted in a court of justice: their asseveration, as that of the Quakers, being considered equivalent. The Sauds profess to abstain from all luxuries, such as tobacco, paun, opium, and wine. They never have nauches or dancing! All attack on man or beast is forbidden, but in self-defence resistance is allowable. Industry is strongly enjoined. The Sauds, like the Quakers, take great care of their poor and infirm people. To receive assistance out of the Puntar Tribe would be reckoned disgraceful, and render the offender liable to excommunication! All parade of worship is forbidden; secret prayer is recommended; alms should be unostentatious; they are not to be done that they should be seen of men. The due regulation of the tongue is a principal duty. The chief seats of the Saud sect are Delhi, Agra, Jypoor, and Furrukhubad; but there are several of the sect scattered over the country. An annual meeting takes place at one or other of the cities above mentioned, at which the concerns of the sect are settled.

The magistrate of Furrukhabad informed me that he found the Sauds an orderly and well-conducted people. They are chiefly engaged in trade. Bhuwance Dos was anxious to become acquainted with the Christian religion, and I gave him some copies of the New Testament in Persian and Hindoostanee, which he said he had read and shown to his people, and much approved. I had no copy of the Old Testament in any language which he understood well; but as he expressed a strong desire to know the account of the creation, as given in it, I explained it to him from an Arabic version, of which he knew a little. 1

promised to procure him a Persian or Hindoostanee Old Testament, if possible. I am of opinion that the Sauds are a very interesting people, and that an intelligent and zealous missionary would find great facility in communicating with them!"

This is indeed a Heathen sect, but its members so surpass some Christians in the mildness of their tempers and in the purity of their lives, that a place could not be refused it in this work.

The Millenarians are those who believe that Christ will reign personally on earth for a thousand years; and their name taken from the Latin, *mille*, a thousand, has a direct allusion to the duration of the spiritual empire. "The doctrine of the Millennium, or a future paradisaical state of the earth, (says a monthly reviewer,) is not of Christian, but of Jewish origin. The tradition is attributed to Elijah, which fixes the duration of the world, in its present imperfect condition, to six thousand years, and announces the approach of a sabbath of a thousand years of universal peace and plenty, to be ushered in by the glorious advent of the Messiah! This idea may be traced in the epistle of Barnabas, and in the opinions of Papias, who knew of no written testimony in its behalf. It was adopted by the Author of the Revelation, by Justin Martyr, by Irenæus, and by a long succession of the Fathers. As the theory is animating and consolatory, and, when divested of cabalistic numbers and allegorical decorations, *probable even in the eye of philosophy*, it will no doubt always retain a number of adherents." It is remarkable, that Druidism, the religion of the first inhabitants of England, had a reference to the progressive melioration of the human species, as is amply shown in an incomparable "Essay on Druidism," prefixed to Richard's "Welsh Nonconformist Memorial, or Cambro-British Biography."

But as the Millennium has, for these few years past, attracted the attention of the public, we shall enter into a short detail of it.

Mr. Joseph Mede, Dr. Gill, Bishop Newton, and Mr. Winchester, contend for the *personal reign* of Christ on earth. To use that prelate's own words, in his "Dissertations on the Prophecies:—"When these great events shall come to pass, of which we collect from the prophecies, this is to be the proper order: the Protestant witnesses shall be greatly exalted, and the 1260 years of their prophesying in sackcloth, and of the tyranny of the beast, shall end together; the conversion and restoration of the Jews succeed; then follows the ruin of the Otoman empire; and then the total destruction of Rome and of Antichrist: when these great events, I say, shall come to pass, then shall the kingdom of Christ commence or the reign of the saints upon earth. So Daniel expressly informs us, that the kingdom of



Christ and the saints will be raised upon the ruins of the kingdom of Antichrist, vii. 26, 27. 'But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end: and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey him.' So likewise St. John saith, that, upon the final destruction of the beast and the false prophet, Rev. xx. 'Satan is bound for a thousand years; and I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus Christ and for the word of God; which had not worshipped the beast, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a *thousand* years. But the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection., It is, I conceive, to these great events, the fall of Antichrist, the re-establishment of the Jews, and the beginning of the glorious Millennium, that the three different dates in Daniel of 1260 years, 1290 years and 1335 years are to be referred.—And as Daniel saith, xii, 12, 'Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 years;' so St. John saith, xx. 6, 'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.' Blessed and happy indeed will be this period; and it is very observable, that the martyrs and confessors of Jesus, in Papist as well as Pagan times, will be raised to partake of this felicity. Then shall all those gracious promises in the Old Testament be fulfilled—of the amplitude and extent, of the peace and prosperity, of the glory and happiness of the church in the latter days. 'Then,' in the full sense of the words, Rev. xi. 15, 'Shall the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.' According to tradition, these thousand years of the reign of Christ and the saints, will be the *seventh Millennium* of the world: for as God created the world in six days, and rested on the *seventh*; so the world, it is argued, will continue *six* thousand years, and the *seventh thousand* will be the great *Sabbatism*, or holy rest to the people of God. 'One day (2 Pet. iii. 8.) being with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.' According to tradition too, these thousand years of the reign of Christ and the saints, are the *great day of judgment*, in the morning or beginning whereof, shall be the coming of Christ in a flaming fire, and the particular judgment of Antichrist and the first resurrection; and in the evening or conclusion thereof shall be the *general resurrection* of

the dead, *small and great*, 'and they shall be judged, every man according to his works!'"

This is a just representation of the Millennium, according to the common views entertained of it, that Christ will reign personally on earth during the period of one thousand years! But Dr. Whitby, in a dissertation on the subject, Dr. Priestly in his "Institutes of Religion," and the author of the "Illustrations of Prophecy," contend against the literal interpretation of the Millennium, both as to its nature and duration. On such a topic however, we cannot suggest our opinions with too great a degree of modesty.

Mr. Winchester, in his "Lectures on Prophecies," freely indulges his imagination on this curious subject. He suggests, that the large rivers in America are all on the eastern side, that the Jews may waft themselves the more easily down to the Atlantic, and then cross that vast ocean to the Holy Land; that Christ will appear at the equinoxes (either March or September) when the days and nights are equal all over the globe; and finally, that the body of Christ will be luminous, and being suspended in the air over the equator for twenty-four hours, will be seen with circumstances of peculiar glory, from pole to pole, by all the inhabitants of the world!

Dr. Priestly, entertaining an exalted idea of the advantages to which our nature may be destined, treated the limitation of the duration of the world to seven thousand years, as a Rabbinical fable; and intimates that the thousand years may be interpreted prophetically: then every day would signify a year, and the Millennium would last for three hundred and sixty-five thousand years! Again he supposes that there will be no resurrection; and that the Millennium implies only the revival of religion. This opinion is indeed to be found in his "Institutes," published many years ago; but latterly he has inclined to the personal reign of Christ. See his "Farewell Sermon," preached at Hackney, previous to his emigration to America. The author of the "Illustrations of Prophecy" contends, that in the period commonly called the Millennium, a melioration of the human race will take place, by natural means, throughout the world. For his reasons, we refer to the work itself, where will be found an animated sketch of that period, when an end shall be put to many calamities now prevalent on the globe.

The late Dr. Brogue published a "Series of Discourses," on the Millennium, well worthy of attention.

The late Reverend Edward Irving, the celebrated Caledonian orator, also published two small volumes on prophecy, in which he contends for a Millennium involving the personal



reign of Christ on earth. Its commencement he dates in 1866; that is, thirty one years hence. The younger portion of the present generation may witness the arrival of this august era; which it has been hitherto thought would be reserved to bless the eyes and gratify the longing expectations of the saints, down to the latest posterity.

However the Millinarians may differ among themselves respecting the nature of this great event, it is agreed on all hands, that such a revolution will be effected in the latter days, by which vice and its attendant misery shall be banished from the earth; thus completely forgetting all those dissensions and animosities by which the religious world hath been agitated, and terminating the grand drama of Providence with universal felicity. We are not unmindful of the prophetic language of Isaiah, xlix. 22, 23,—together with a sublime passage from the Book of Revelations, chap. xi. 15, with which the cannon of Scripture concludes—"Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people. And Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their Queens thy nursing mothers, (they shall become good themselves, and be the protectors of religious liberty,) and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.—And the seventh Angel sounded, and there were great voices in Heaven, saying,—The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

In America, several sectaries have been formed during this century. The Cumberland Presbyterians had their origin in the great and glorious revival which first appeared in Logan county, Kentucky, and gradually spread its influence over the West, and was felt in some of the Eastern States; but as at the close of this work, we give a detailed account of that revival, and the origin, progress, and doctrines of that Church, we will not dwell upon this subject at present.

The Stoneites, or New Light Church, had its origin at the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in 1803. They have been known in the language of the day under various names. They have assumed to themselves the exclusive name of *The Christian Church*, but have usually been called New Lights, or Stoneites.

At the above mentioned meeting of the Synod, two members of the Synod were charged with having been active in disseminating doctrines contrary to the publicly received doctrines of the Presbyterian church. And though scarcely any individual doubted the fact, yet there was a great deal of difficulty in bringing the accused to a legal trial. And after all the legal difficulties connected with the form in which the matter was to

be tried, had been settled, the accused brethren, and three others, handed in their protest and declinature.

A variety of means both judicial and extra-judicial, were used during the sessions of the Synod to bring these brethren to a sense of their duty. But all attempts failing, the Synod after due deliberation, solemnly suspended them from all the functions of the holy ministry, until sorrow and repentance for their schismatical dispositions should be manifested. Their congregations were also, as usual in such cases, declared vacant, and commissioners were appointed to publish the sentence of suspension in these congregations, and to exhort the people to unity and peace.

The time which elapsed between the meeting of the Synod in September, 1803, and the meeting in October, 1804, was a serious and important period. The suspended brethren possessing considerable popular powers, and aided by an enthusiasm in religion, considerably above the ordinary feeling, pushed their triumphs over orthodoxy and good order, through the whole territories of the Synod. Scarcely a congregation remained unhurt—and many were altogether annihilated. And from the pamphlets and tracts which were issued by the party this year, there is considerable evidence that they considered their triumphs to be complete and universal. A small tract issued by them in June, concludes thus:

“We hereby inform you, that we have made an appointment for a general meeting of Christians at Bethel, seven miles below Lexington, on Thursday before the second Sabbath of October next. The design of this meeting is, to celebrate the *feast of love*, and unite in prayer to God for the outpouring of his Spirit. The place of meeting was chosen as a centre for the States of Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, and all who are engaged in the common cause of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, may unite and swell the solemn cry, *Thy kingdom come. Even so come, Lord Jesus.* Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

“P. S.—We will meet prepared to encamp on the ground, and continue for several days.”

The meeting here called was held a few days before the meeting of the Synod, and was sufficiently numerous to alarm the heart of an ecclesiastic who has little or nothing but the favour or frown of the multitude to direct his conduct. Four of the separating brethren attended the meeting of the Synod, and all that could have possibly been done, both in public and in private, judicially and extra-judicially, was done in order to heal the breach. A committee appointed by the General Assembly met with the Synod, and acted as a kind of mediator



between the Synod and the separating brethren. Before any discussion took place, it was unanimously agreed by all parties concerned, to spend some time in solemn prayer to Almighty God, for his gracious countenance and aid in the case—and Messrs. Marques, a member the General Assembly committee, and Marshall, one of the separating brethren, were called on to lead the devotion. All attempts, however, to a reconciliation proved abortive. When the business was directly and formally entered upon, the separating brethren were found to take as high ground as ever they had assumed. The sum of all they said was, The Synod must come to our terms, we cannot come to theirs. We have since we were licensed and ordained by the authority of the Presbyterian church, changed our views of divine truth, and the Synod must change their views, if they wish to count us among their numbers.

The judicial intercourse with the brethren may be considered to have ceased with the meeting of the Synod of 1804. Whatever attempts may have been made by individuals, it does not appear that the Synod ever after made any attempts to bring them to a sense of their duty. In the meeting of 1808, the business was once more brought up, and the following motion introduced, which after due deliberation, was adopted; viz: Whereas, R. Marshall, Barton W. Stone, Richard McNemar, John Dunlavy, and J. Thompson, were suspended by this Synod for declining the jurisdiction of the Confession of Faith of the church, and have continued ever since to enlarge their schism, to multiply their erroneous opinions, to scandalise the Presbyterian church, and to oppose a number of the essential articles of our holy religion—and whereas the church has already used every effort in her power to reclaim them, and as our form of government directs that ministers acting in such a manner be deposed and cut off from the church—Therefore, *Resolved*, that the above mentioned R. Marshall, Barton W. Stone, &c. &c. &c. be **DEPOSED**, in the name of Christ, and by the authority committed to us, they are hereby **DEPOSED** from all the functions of the gospel ministry, and cut off from our communion.

These brethren being separated from the Synod, they formed themselves into a Presbytery. In the name of the Presbytery, which they called the Presbytery of Springfield, they, in the course of a few months, published their *Apology*, or defence of their conduct. According to this publication, and a variety of other evidence, both printed and verbal, these men were at this time distinguished by their—1. Denying the doctrine of absolute, and unconditional decrees.—2. Maintaining that Christ died equally for all men, and that all men, notwithstanding a

considerable corruption of nature, had still, independent of any special influence of the Holy Spirit, sufficient power to believe—and, 3. That all creeds and confessions ought to be rejected; and the Bible, without any comment, or explanation, acknowledged as the only bond of union and church-fellowship among Christians. Though they had formed themselves into a Presbytery, and had been active in organising distinct societies, yet they, in this publication, as well as some others, renounce all pretension of forming a distinct party. “They considered (Apology, page 20,) this Presbytery providentially formed to cover the truth from the impending storm, and check the lawless career of opposition.” And, however paradoxical this declaration appeared at the time it was made, we, for our part, have no doubt but they were sincere in making it. Their existence in the Presbyterian form, or any other, they considered (as one of themselves expressed it) only as a kind of asylum for those who were cast out, so that they might *come and be there*, like David’s father and mother with the king of Moab—*till they would know what God would do for them*.

Hence, in June, 1804, when it had scarcely existed nine months, the Presbytery of Springfield was, with the consent of all its members, dissolved. This dissolution was made known to the world in a small pamphlet entitled “The last Will and Testament of the Presbytery of Springfield.” In the address which we call their last Presbyterial act, their reasons for dissolving are stated in these words:

“With deep concern they (the members of the Springfield Presbytery) viewed the divisions, and party spirit, which have long existed among professing Christians; principally owing to the adoption of human creeds and forms of government. While they were united under the name of a Presbytery, they endeavoured to cultivate love with all Christians; but found it extremely difficult to suppress the idea, that they themselves were a party separate from others. This difficulty increased in proportion to their success in the ministry. Jealousies were excited in the minds of other denominations; and a temptation was laid before those who were connected with them, to view them in the same light. At their last meeting they undertook to prepare for the press, a piece entitled *Observations on Church Government*, in which the world will see the beautiful simplicity of Christian church government, stript of human inventions and lordly traditions. As they proceeded in the investigation of that subject, they soon found, that there was neither precept nor example, in the New Testament for such confederacies as Church Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, General Assemblies, &c. Hence they concluded, that while they continued in the connec-



tion, in which they then stood, they were off the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which Christ himself is the chief corner stone. However just, therefore, their views of church government might have been, their publication would have carried the mark of the *beast*, being sent out under the name of a Presbytery."

This extract, though nothing but sophistry, is the only paragraph in the pamphlet which has any thing like sense and solidity. The preceding part of the pamphlet stands in the form of a last will, and is both nonsensical and profane.

Previous to their dissolution, they had sent forth a considerable number of preachers—yet, even in sending these, they did not consider themselves as exercising any authority, which any company of Christians might not do. The following, written at Springfield, March, 1804, may serve as a specimen of their form of licenses:

"For as much as our brother, Malcham Worley, has made known to us the exercises of his mind for some time past, expressive of a divine call to labour in word and doctrine; and we being satisfied, from a long and intimate acquaintance with him, of his talents, both natural and acquired, being such, as through the grace of God, may render him useful; and considering that the way of God is above our ways, it therefore seemed good to us with one accord to encourage our brother to the work, whereunto we trust the Holy Ghost is calling him; and we do hereby recommend him to the churches scattered abroad, to be forwarded in his calling, according to the manifestation of the spirit given him to profit withal.

Signed in behalf of the Presbytery,

B. W. STONE, Clerk.

Early in the spring of 1805, the substance of two letters written to a friend, on the Attonement, by Barton W. Stone, made its appearance. In this pamphlet the author denies that there was such a covenant made with Adam as is generally called the Covenant of Works. He asserts that there is no Trinity of persons in the Godhead, but only of characters and relations; and consequently that Christ, as a person distinguished from the Father, is not true and proper God. He further denies that there is any vindictive wrath in God which must be endured or appeased before a sinner can be pardoned. He rejects the doctrine, that Christ is surety, either for the elect, or for all mankind, or that he endured the curse of the law, or the wrath of God, to display God's justice, and obtain for sinners the remission of the curse. He asserts that we are not justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ; but, that by faith in the gospel

our hearts are changed, we are made just or righteous, and declared so by God, because we are so indeed. And he holds that justification, sanctification, conversion, regeneration, salvation, propitiation, reconciliation, and atonement, all mean the same thing. He states that ancient sacrifices only had their effect on the worshipper, producing faith and repentance; and that the blood or death of Christ does the same thing; having the its whole efficacy on the believer.

As no common belief is now acknowledged in the New Light church, it would be unjust to charge all their preachers and members with holding these doctrines. Yet it cannot be denied, that a majority of their preachers had adopted them previous to the publication of the pamphlet, and were active in defending them some considerable time after. Nor have any, except two, ever fairly and publicly renounced them. The epithet then, we think, is fairly applied, when we call the class, or community, a *Socinian Association*.

It has already been intimated, that the circumstances under which the brethren separated from the Synod, were remarkably favourable for extending their influence in forming a party. Nor did any of them neglect to improve these advantages. Yet such were the materials of which the party was composed, and such were the visionary principles by which they were actuated that, as a party, it could not in the nature of things be lasting. Hence we find, that it was scarcely known, till it was found falling to pieces. In the spring of 1805, three Shakers, from New Lebanon, state of New York, arrived in Kentucky, and found the fields white for their harvest. Their first visit, it is said, was paid to Matthew Huston, of Madison county, who had been converted to the New Light church by the Letters on the Atonement. He, and a considerable number of his people, readily embraced their doctrine, though they did not avow it till some months after. They next visited Richard McNemar, on the Little Miami, State of Ohio. They were still more successful here. Richard, with the most of his church, including some of the most distinguished licentiates of the Presbytery of Springfield, hailed them as the messengers of Christ's second appearance. J. Dunlavy, who lived also in Ohio, with a considerable number of his flock, followed in a few months. The whole object of the warfare was now changed. Far from having any force to spare to the demolishing of old orthodox systems of faith and church order, the New Light church had not strength enough to defend itself. It was, in fact, a prey to every invader.

Though they had again, and again, renounced every thing like *authority*—yet they found it necessary still to have meetings



of preachers and private members promiscuously assembled, which they called conferences: but these were found to be of no use, for either internal or external purposes; because, after conference was over, each one acted as he pleased, however contrary to the conclusions of the conference.

This sect of Socinians, are rapidly sinking into oblivion, most of them, with Stone at their head, have united with the Campbellites, or the Restorers of the Ancient Gospel.

Campbellites or Christians or Restorers of the Ancient Gospel. The founder of this sect is the celebrated Alexander Campbell, a native of Ireland, and formerly a Presbyterian minister. This gentleman condemns all written creeds and confessions, professes to take the sacred oracles as his guide, denies the operations of the Holy Spirit, holds that faith is simply historical, consisting in a few simple facts, and not doctrines; that he who exercises this faith must submit to be immersed, by which act the sinner is justified, pardoned, and saved; that to be born again, and to be immersed is the same thing. In his Extra No. 1, he says, "We know it is not a difficult matter for believers to be born of water, and if any of them disdain it, we cannot hope for their eternal salvation." Again, "Those who are *thus* begotten, and born of God, are children of God." He denies that in the present age of the world, men are called of God to the Gospel ministry, but asserts that it is the privilege of all, who have been immersed for the remission of sins, to teach, immerse, and *break the loaf*.

The followers of Mr. Campbell are numerous in the West; especially in some parts of Kentucky and Tennessee. In Nashville, Tennessee, they have a large and flourishing society, consisting of upwards of four hundred members. Although we view their distinguishing tenets as subversive of vital godliness, yet we cannot but hope that some of them have been the subjects of the enlightening and convicting influences of the Holy Spirit. That they have relied on Christ by a living faith; that they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb; and will yet appear before the Throne, clothed in white.

Late writers have estimated the population of the world at 737,000,000, and have divided it according to their religious views as follows. Of Jews 4,000,000,—Christians, 228,000,000, Mohammedans, 100,000,000—and the rest Pagans. The balance of *political power*, including the whole population, is in favour of Christianity. The division is made thus:—Under Christian governments, 387,788,000—under Mohammedans, 72,000,000—under Pagans, 277,212,000. The nations that have adopted Christianity are thus divided:—Protestant States, 193,-

624,000—Papal States, 134,164,000—Greek, or Russian church, 60,000,000.

The Greek Church is tolerated in Turkey, countenanced in Hungary, Slavonia, and Dalmatia, and established by law in Russia. The Latin, or Romish church comprehends within its pale, the principal part of France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Austria, the Spanish and Portuguese States in America, their colonies in Asia, and Africa, and the greater part of the population of Ireland. They have also considerable numbers in the United States. The Protestants comprehend the Lutheran, Episcopal, and Reformed Churches, besides a number of sects that are either united with them, or embrace their leading doctrines. The Lutherans are established in Prussia, Saxony, Hanover, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Livonia. They have congregations in several other parts. The Episcopal Church, or Church of England, is established in England and Ireland. The Reformed, or Calvinistic Church is most prevalent in Switzerland, in some countries of Germany, and in Holland; and it is the established Church of Scotland, under the name of Presbyterian. Connected with these Churches, as Protestants, are the following denominations, which are more or less numerous on both sides of the Atlantic: namely, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, Unitarians or Socinians, Quakers, Moravians, Mennonites, Swedenborgians, Universalists, and Shakers.

The Presbyterians are considerably numerous in Scotland, England, Ireland, and the United States. This church in the United States, under the care of the General Assembly comprises, by the last reports, 23 Synods, 118 Presbyteries, 2,648 congregations, 1,914 Bishops, with 236 Licentiates, making 2,150 preachers of the gospel, 185 candidates for the ministry of reconciliation, and 247,964 communicants.

The Episcopalians have Churches in Canada, and other provinces under the British government. In the United States they constitute a respectable portion of the Christian community, and are denominated the Protestant Episcopal Church.—They number about 700 congregations, which are most numerous in New York, Connecticut, Maryland and Virginia, though they have establishments in most of the other States.

The Methodists, in England, are *now* divided principally into *two* large bodies; the one founded by Mr. Wesley, the other by Mr. Whitfield. The Whitfield Methodists are confined principally to England, where they have numerous Churches. Wesleyan Methodists are numerous in England, have large congregations in Scotland and Ireland, and are in the United States the most numerous denomination; their communicants amount-



ing to more than half a million. They prevail in all parts of the Union, but are proportionably more numerous in the West, than in the East. Secessions from the Methodist Church in England, have in a few instances happened, and one has recently occurred in the United States. Those that have seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church, are called *Reformed*, or *Associate Methodists*. They adhere to the Methodist doctrine, but discard certain parts of the Discipline, particularly those concerning Episcopacy and the manner of constituting the General Conference.

The Associate Baptists have flourishing establishments in England, Holland, and some other parts of Europe, and are, next to the Methodists, the most numerous body of Protestants in America; numbering according to their own accounts, above 4,300 congregations, and more than 304,000 communicants. Though considerably divided on points of speculation, they are agreed in administering the ordinance of baptism to none but adults, and exclusively by immersion, believing that to be the only Scriptural mode. In government they resemble the Congregationalists, and are most of them Calvinistic in their doctrine. They have Churches in all parts of the United States, but are most numerous in Rhode Island and Kentucky.

Under the general name of Baptists are included besides the Associate or Calvinistic Baptists, those called *Christians*, Free-will Baptists, Seventh Day Baptists, Tunkers, Mennonites, and some others. The name of Baptists, is applied to them partly on account of their origin and connexion with the Associate Baptists, and partly from their adherence to immersion as the only proper mode of Baptism. Some of them, such as the *Christians* and Free-willers, deny the Calvinistic doctrines of election, reprobation, particular redemption, &c. and maintain the universality of the Atonement and the free agency of man, as held by the Arminians. Though not numerous, these bodies of Christians have establishments in various parts of this country, and appear to be increasing. The Mennonites have considerable numbers in some parts of Europe, and about 30,000 in America.

The Congregationalists, which in Great Britain are called *Independents*, are in America confined chiefly to the New England States, where they are very numerous, having above 1,200 congregations, and 140,000 communicants. They are now called Orthodox Congregationalists, to distinguish them from those of the same denomination who are Unitarians. The Unitarians in New England are similar to the Socinians in Europe, being Antitrinitarians. The latter have a number of Churches in Poland and Transylvania, and it is said that some of the Pa-

pists are secretly attached to their system. In New England, including a few Churches in other parts of the Union, the Unitarian Congregationalists number about one hundred and sixty or seventy thousand.

The Quakers are numerous in England, and are said to have four hundred congregations in America; where they have recently become almost equally divided on the Unitarian doctrine. Those of them who advocated that doctrine, are denominated *Hicksites*.

The Universalists have Churches in Great Britain and some other parts, but are not numerous in Europe. In the United States they reckon about 300 congregations, principally in the northern sections of the country.

The Moravians, or United Brethren, are comparatively few in number, but in missionary labours and sufferings, they have in proportion to their means, exceeded every other body of Christians. When they first sent out missionaries their numbers were not above 6,000; yet in the early part of the eighteenth century, they had missionaries at different places on both sides of the Atlantic. Before the end of that century they had numerous missionary establishments, some of which were in Europe, others in Asia, Africa, and America.

The Swedenborgians are numerous and respectable in Sweden, have some establishments in England, and number about 5,000 in America. There are also in this country about 6,000 Shakers, and perhaps an equal number belonging to various smaller sects.

In this account of the numbers of different religious societies, we have had reference, in most instances to the *communicants*. The numbers belonging to the congregations of each denomination, according to the best estimates we are able to obtain, will be found in a subsequent statistical table.

The religious bodies that appear to take the deepest interest, and to be at present most active in the cause of missions, are the Church of England, or Episcopalians, Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Moravians. But if other religious societies have not taken so conspicuous a part as those we have mentioned, it is certain that with very few exceptions, all have done and are still doing something towards spreading the gospel in heathen countries.

During the dark ages of ignorance and spiritual despotism, the cause of missions was very little regarded, and but feeble efforts were made for the spread of the gospel among Pagans or Christians. After the revival of evangelical religion in the sixteenth century, the missionary spirit revived, and missions began to be established.



In the sixteenth century the Papists sent missionaries into Asia, Africa, and America. The conquests of the Spaniards and Portuguese prepared the way, and with a view to spread their religion with their laws, they sent out priests to instruct the people whom they had conquered. There were, however, individuals, such as Francis Xavier, who extended their labours where no conquests had been made, and who are said to have met with great success. A congregation of cardinals was instituted in Italy, in the same century, and a similar one in France, for the purpose of preparing and sending out missionaries; and several of their ecclesiastics engaged in the work. Besides visiting America and Africa, they penetrated into several parts of Asia, and were for a season very prosperous. But such were the difficulties and misfortunes which afterwards befel them, that they had but little remaining fruit of their labours. In Africa their efforts were attended with very little effect; but in Spanish America they laboured extensively, and many of the native Indians are reported to have received their instructions.

In the early settlement of North America by the Europeans, considerable efforts were made for the conversion of the Indians, many of whom became religious. The Scriptures were translated into the Indian dialect, numbers of the natives were taught to read them, and some of them became useful in teaching others. Mr. Elliot, Mr. Brainard, and others used great exertions, endured great sufferings, and had great success.

In 1621, the Dutch sent missionaries to Amboyna, Formosa, Columba, Java, and Malabar, and formed numerous churches, some of which are represented as being still in a flourishing condition. In 1705, missionaries were sent from the University of Halle, in Germany, to the Malabar coast, who laboured with such success, that more than 18,000 Gentoos, according to their report, received the truths of Christianity.

The Moravians, in 1741, instituted a society in London for the furtherance of the gospel, by aiding more effectually their missions. In Amsterdam a similar society was formed by the same people, and afterwards renewed at Zeist, near Utrecht. They also formed a society, 1787, in Pennsylvania, for the support of missions, by which their labours in America have been much extended. During the last century they had flourishing missions in the *West Indies*, in *Greenland*, in *Upper Canada*, on the *Coast of Labrador*, at the *Cape of Good Hope*, *South America*, *East Indies*, and in the *Russian part of Asia*. In these several places their number of missions was about thirty, their missionaries one hundred and forty, and heathen converts estimated between twenty and thirty thousand.

In 1786, the Wesleyan Methodists in England began the

establishment of missions in the West Indies. Dr. Coke, with three others, had sailed for Nova Scotia for the purpose of establishing a mission in that country; but being driven by the gales to these islands, they relinquished their first object, and turned their attention to the negro slaves. After landing at Antigua, and making arrangements for future operations in that place, Dr. Coke proceeded to Dominica, and afterwards visited other parts, finding in almost every instance a very favourable reception. Besides these two islands, missions were ultimately established at St. Vincent's, St. Christopher's, Nevis, the Virgin Islands, Barbadoes, St. Bartholomew's, Grenada, Trinidad, St. Thomas's, New Providence, and the other Bahama islands. After seeing these missions supplied with missionaries, and in a very flourishing condition, Dr. Coke, with several other missionaries, sailed in 1814, for the East Indies, for the purpose of establishing and conducting missions in that country. Before the ship arrived at its place of destination, he was called to his reward. Those who sailed with him proceeded in the work they had undertaken, and being followed by others, an extensive field had been opened to them for the spread of the gospel and religious instruction among the inhabitants. The connexion of Wesleyan Methodists in England are still making great and increasing exertions for evangelizing the heathen, in different parts of the world. They have at this time one hundred and fifty stations, one hundred and ninety-three foreign missionaries, and above 40,000 converts from heathenism to Christianity, as the fruit of their missionary labours.

The Methodists in the United States, besides gathering into their societies above 70,000 of the negroes, by means of itinerant labours similar to those of missionaries, have made considerable exertions in support of the missionary cause. Early in the present century they sent missionaries into Canada and some other places, and have since that time been increasing the number of their establishments, and the means for supporting them. They have now in different parts of the States and Territories of the American Republic, fifty stations, in which are about sixty missionaries. Twenty-three of these are among the Indians, of whom above 6,000 have become members of the Church. Of the stations among the Indians, the most flourishing are the Choctaw, Cherokee, and the Wyandott. The Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church is established at New York, but there are numerous branches and auxiliaries in various parts of the Union. The Methodists in Upper Canada have ten missionary stations, in which are 2,118 native communicants, and above 400 children in their Indian schools.

In the early part of the last century, missionaries were sent



by the king of Denmark to the Danish possessions in the East Indies, and a mission was established at Tranquebar on the coast of Coromandel. Among the early labourers in this mission, was Mr. Swartz, whose labours were attended with great effect. The missionaries in this establishment learned the language of the country, which is the Malabarian; and besides preaching in it to the natives, they made translations of the Scriptures, and wrote other books, which they taught them to read. It has been computed that since the establishment of this mission, and some others on the coast, more than 40,000 of the Indians have embraced Christianity. Dr. Buchanan, who visited the stations in this part, makes the estimate at double that number.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, the Baptists in England formed a missionary society, and sent missionaries to Calcutta, Serampore and other places in their vicinity. Many difficulties attended their first efforts, but their perseverance enabled them to surmount every obstacle, and to accomplish some very important objects for the spread of Christianity in that populous, but benighted country. The seat of their operations was fixed at Serampore, twelve miles north of Calcutta. They employed their time in preaching to the natives in the languages of the country, in the diffusion of learning, and the translating and circulating the Holy Scriptures. The whole Bible has been translated and printed in five languages of India, and the New Testament in eight. One of the languages in which the whole of the Scriptures has been printed, is the Chinese. Schools have been established for the instruction of native children, multitudes of which have been and are now receiving instruction. A college has been founded for the purpose of qualifying native teachers, and a printing office is established, having ten presses, is constantly employed.

Nor have the Baptist Churches in the United States been inattentive to the subject of missions. They have sent a number of missionaries to the East and West Indies, and to several of the savage tribes of North America. Many of their missions have been very prosperous.

In 1795, an extensive institution was formed in London, for the purpose of spreading the gospel among the heathen, called the London Missionary Society. It consisted of Christians belonging to the established church, and to various denominations of dissenters, all uniting in great harmony for the accomplishment of a most noble enterprise. The society undertook the establishment of missions in the South Sea Islands; in which they have had extraordinary success. The first attempts were made at Otaheite and Tongataboo, without much encouragement. Many unfortunate occurrences rendered the prospect

for some time uncertain. At length the number of converts began to increase, and constant accessions were made to the society of native Christians, until the whole inhabitants of Otaheite, and seven or eight of the neighboring islands, with very few exceptions, voluntarily renounced idolatry and became converts to Christianity. Several thousands in the different islands have learned to read in the Tabeitan language, which the missionaries have given them in a written form. Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic are taught in their schools, and many of the natives are engaged in instructing each other. This society has sent out missionaries also to the East Indies, to Africa, and other places; and the missions under its superintendence are well sustained and in a prosperous condition.

The Edinburgh Missionary Society was instituted in 1796, consisting of members of the established Presbyterian Church, and of other denominations of Christians. This society, in conjunction with one that had been formed at Glasgow, attempted establishments in the western part of Africa, in the country of Sierra Leone; and have been in part successful. Their designs were in several instances defeated by the influence of slave dealers, and the missionaries have been compelled to confine their labours within much narrower limits than was at first intended; being employed principally in the neighbourhood of the English colony, in instructing Africans that are rescued from slave ships. Of the missionaries who first visited this country, three died by sickness, one was murdered, and the rest left the settlements. But others have been willing to take their places, and if the difficulties arising from the slave traffic were removed, the mission might be extensively useful.

The American Board of Foreign Missions was formed in 1810, by the Congregationalists in New England, in conjunction with such others as were disposed to unite with them, and has pursued its object with great energy and success. This society has about twenty missionaries in the Sandwich islands, several in Asia and Europe, and above twenty among the Indians in North America, besides numerous assistants and instructors. Their schools in the Sandwich islands alone are supplied with about 500 native instructors, and contain 45,000 scholars. The pecuniary resources of the Board are extensive and increasing.

The Presbyterians in the United States are likewise actively engaged in the missionary cause. In foreign missions they unite and co-operate with the American Board, of which they constitute a part; and they have numerous Home missionaries, employed by the Board of the General Assembly, for the purpose of supplying vacant churches, and other places that are destitute.



Within a few years past, the Protestant Episcopal Church has directed her attention more effectually to this important subject. In 1827, a missionary society was instituted at Philadelphia. This society has established one mission among the Indians at Green Bay, and another in Greece; both of which are likely to be useful.

Several other societies have been established, and missions undertaken by different bodies of Christians. The Connecticut Missionary Society was formed in 1798, Dutch Reformed in 1822, the Home Missionary in 1826, and the Massachusetts Society, reorganized, 1827; besides similar ones in Europe that have not been mentioned.

From this brief view of the state of the church in reference to missions it will be seen, that during the latter part of the eighteenth century, and since the commencement of the nineteenth, the attention of Protestant communities both in the Eastern and Western hemispheres, has been more than ever awakened to the deplorable condition of the unevangelized part of the world. Scarcely any thing has appeared since the apostolic age, that can equal the zeal, activity, and success, of some that have laboured, and others who are now labouring in this most interesting cause. And should the interest now manifested, in some degree throughout Christendom, increase during thirty years to come as it has for the last thirty years, the result cannot be doubtful. The present state and prospects of the Christian world, encourage the hope that this will be the fact; that science and true religion will be greatly extended, that the Scriptures will be circulated in the language of every nation, and that the Great Head of the church will have the heathen for his inheritance.

The world is now generally divided into five grand divisions, namely, *Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceanica, and America*. Of these divisions, *Europe* has the fewest foreign missions within its own boundaries, most of the nations belonging to it having received Christianity. The whole population has been estimated at 227,700,000, of which there are from nine to ten millions of Turks, who are principally Mohammedans.

Great exertions have been made by different bodies of Christians to circulate the Scriptures and establish schools among the Greeks. The present inhabitants of Greece have, in reference to their moral state, been divided into the three following classes. 1. *Superstitious*, the most numerous, but, owing to their vices and ignorance, the most feeble. 2. *Infidel*, comparatively small, but possessing intellectual strength. 3. *Philanthropic*, having intelligence and virtue, and exercising a respectable influence—ready to do all in their power to enlighten and im-

prove their fellow citizens. Such is the general deficiency in science and morals, that those who are enlightened and benevolent are utterly unable to arrest the current of licentiousness; and without ample aid from foreign sources it will be long before this unfortunate people will be redeemed from their degraded condition.

The British Foreign Bible Society have, for several years, been distributing copies of the Scriptures among them, thousands of which are now in circulation, together with numerous tracts, and are read in the churches and in the schools.

The seven islands which constitute the Ionian Republic, contain about 200,000 inhabitants, and are under the protection of Great Britain. The London and Church Missionary Societies, have established missions and sent missionaries to these islands, in which are also about seventy schools, as many teachers, and above 2,000 scholars. Sabbath schools have been established at Malta, Corfu, and other places, and are thus far, successful. In the other Grecian islands there are about thirty schools, in which are said to be 2,000 scholars. There are at this time in Malta, in the Ionian Republic, in Tino, Syria, and Smyrna, thirteen missionaries, and the same number of assistants. In Great Britain, Ireland, and some other parts, Home Missions have been instituted, for the purpose of supplying religious instruction to destitute places within the limits of the countries in which they have been established. These have already been found extensively useful.

The population of *Asia*, according to late estimates, is between 340 and 390 millions. Some writers make it less, others more, but all agree that it is the most populous part of the globe. The inhabitants consist of Pagans, Mohammedans, Christians, and some Jews; but the Pagans are far the most numerous, and next to them the Mohammedans. It is said, however, that in Asiatic Turkey, at least two thirds of the people are Greek Christians.

The island of Ceylon contains nearly a million inhabitants, chiefly Pagans. It is under the British government, and has become an interesting field for missionary labour. Of the missionaries here, the American Board have six missionaries, seven assistants, thirty-one native assistants, and about 4,000 scholars. The Methodists have eleven missionaries, sixteen assistants, nine native assistants, 4,000 scholars. The Church Missionary Society support eight missionaries, fourteen assistants, forty-eight native assistants, and have nearly 2,000 scholars. The Baptists have one missionary, three native assistants, 600 scholars.—There are in all the schools between ten and eleven thousand scholars, and perhaps 9,000 which constantly attend. About



1,000 of the natives have become communicants among the different denominations that support the Missions.

The population of Hindoostan is reckoned at more than 130,000,000, now principally under the British government. The missions in this immense population are conducted by the London Missionary Society, Church Missionary Society, Societies of the Baptist denomination, Methodists, Scottish Missionary Society, American Board of Foreign Missions, &c. Much has been done in the establishment of schools, translating and circulating the Scriptures, and in the diffusion of useful knowledge. The missionaries engaged in the various stations in this country are about 120 in number, having with them 138 assistants, above 400 native assistants, 3,000 communicants under their care, and between 30,000 and 40,000 scholars in their schools. In one district called Tinnevely, great changes have been made in favour of Christianity; and the most encouraging prospects have been witnessed in numerous villages. Thousands have recently abandoned Paganism, many of them have received baptism, and others are enquiring after the truth. The British Foreign Bible Society have an auxiliary at Calcutta, one at Bombay, and also at Madras. The whole country is, indeed, a field, white, and ready to harvest, and nothing seems necessary to the entire establishment of true religion, but a greater number of labourers and the blessing of Heaven.

In the Farther India, a part of which has been also conquered by the British government, there is a dense population, consisting of perhaps 20,000,000, in the darkness and ignorance of Paganism. Here, however, a missionary field is opened, and missions have been established by the London Missionary Society, by the American Board of Foreign Missions, and by the Baptists. There are in the different stations, twelve missionaries, thirteen assistants, nine native assistants, and about 800 scholars in the schools.

China is the most populous, and one of the most ancient kingdoms of which we have any knowledge. The population has been variously estimated, from 150,000,000 to 170,000,000, and even as high as 330,000,000. But the lowest estimate is probably nearest the truth. A cloud of ignorance and superstition has long overspread the inhabitants of this country, and seems likely not soon to be removed.

It has already been mentioned, that the Papists established missions in this country and neighbouring places in the sixteenth century. Their efforts were at first successful, afterwards rendered almost abortive, but recently somewhat more encouraging. According to their own accounts, they have since the commencement of this century, added several thousands to their

church. The London Missionary Society sent a missionary to China in 1807, who has been very successful in translating the Scriptures, and in preparing other works for the instruction of the Chinese people. The labours of this persevering missionary, Rev. Dr. Morrison, will probably be of incalculable benefit to this vast empire. He has published the whole Bible in the Chinese language, a Chinese dictionary in five large volumes, a grammar, and some smaller works. In 1813, he was joined by Dr. Milne, and in 1829, by two missionaries from the United States. The most successful means of spreading Christianity in China, will be found in the circulation of the Bible in the language of the country.

The London Missionary Society has sent three missionaries into Liberia, and seven with six assistants into the countries near the Caucasus. Others have gone to Armenia, Syria, the Holy Land, and to the shores of the Mediterranean. Some of these missions have not yet become permanent, in others, schools have been established with favourable prospects, and in some there is great encouragement.

In *Africa* Christianity was early planted, but the ignorance and superstition of the inhabitants have generally presented strong barriers to its progress. Mohammedanism is diffused over the Northern and some of the Eastern parts, but there are some remains of Christianity in Egypt and Abyssinia. The most odious forms of Paganism prevail in almost all the negro tribes. Some of them are yet in the practice of offering human sacrifices. The population of this continent is not definitely known, and it is difficult to make an accurate estimate. Some writers have supposed it to be 60,000,000, others have set it as high as 110,000,000; but of these two numbers, the first is probably more correct.

A colony has been founded in Western Africa, at a place called Liberia, by the American Colonization Society, which was commenced about the year 1820. It is in a prosperous condition, having an extensive sea coast and considerable trade. Religion has already commenced spreading among the people, and it is anticipated that a way will be opened through this colony for preaching the gospel to the surrounding tribes. Schools have been formed which are flourishing, and in which many of the native children are receiving instruction. The inhabitants of this colony as well as that at Sierra Leone, consists chiefly of negroes that have been liberated from slavery. The German Missionary Society have four missionaries at Liberia, and four at the Gold Coast, besides some assistants. At Sierra Leone, the Church Missionary Society have six missionaries and several assistants, about ten native assistants, between



seven and eight hundred communicants, and above 1600 scholars in the schools. The Methodists also have in this place and vicinity, seven stations, one missionary with an assistant, 160 scholars, and several hundred communicants.

The Isle of France contains about 80,000 inhabitants, chiefly French colonists and blacks. The London Missionary Society has established a mission and flourishing school upon this island. They have likewise found an interesting missionary field in the island of Madagascar. Both of these islands lie in the Indian Ocean, and the latter is separated from the continent of Africa by the Mosambique channel. The population of Madagascar has been estimated at 4,000,000, partly Mohammedans and partly Pagans. Here are five missionaries, six assistants, and between three and four thousand scholars attending schools. On this populous and extensive island Christianity is encouraged and seems likely to acquire extensive influence.

In South Africa, including the Colony at the Cape and Caffraria, several missions have been established and are now in successful operation. Of those belonging to these stations, the Moravians have eighteen missionaries, eleven assistants, about 300 communicants, and 200 scholars:—the London Missionary Society supports twenty missionaries, twenty-three assistants, a number of communicants, and above 1000 scholars:—the Wesleyan Methodists have sixteen missionaries, 470 communicants, and 800 scholars:—the Glasgow Missionary Society has three missionaries, the French Protestants three, and the Rhenish Missionary Society four. Though this part of Africa is inhabited by some of the lowest and most wretched of our species, numbers seem ready to make the sacrifice of leaving a civilized land and dwelling among them, with the hope of leading them out of darkness into the light and liberty of God's children.

The Church Missionary have three missionaries in Egypt, under whose superintendence schools are conducted at Cairo. Bibles and tracts have also been circulated to some extent in this country, but the darkness and ignorance of the people render them slow in their effects. The number of missionary stations throughout Africa, is ninety-one, of missionaries and assistants, 180, of communicants at the different stations, 2,600, and of scholars in the schools, between seven and eight thousand.

*Oceanica* is the name now given to designate various groups of islands in the Pacific Ocean, consisting of New Holland, New Zealand, New Guinea, the islands of Polynesia, those of the Indian Archipelago, and several small islands.

This division of the globe is larger than Europe, though much less populous. It contains above 3,000,000 square miles, and its population is calculated at 20,300,000, though the real num-

ber is probably much larger. Until the establishment of missions among them, the inhabitants were involved in Pagan darkness and ignorance, as most of them still continue to be. Of the great success of the missions in some of the islands, we have already spoken, and it may be hoped that similar effects will yet be seen in others.

The islands of Polynesia are numerous, consisting of several groups, among which are the Caroline, 80 in number;—Friendly, having more than 100;—Navigators, seven in number;—Pelew; Marquesas; Sandwich; Society; Ravaivai; Harvey; and the Georgian, consisting of Otaheite and Eimeo. The missions to these islands are established at present in those of the Sandwich, Georgian, Society, Marquesas, Harvey, Friendly and Ravaivia; and are conducted by the London Missionary Society, the American Board of Foreign Missions, and the Missionary Society of the Wesleyan Methodists in England. The numbers belonging to these societies are as follows:—missionaries 27, assistants 30, native assistants 38, communicants 2,400, native teachers of schools, 600, and above 50,000 scholars. The scholars belong principally to the schools under the superintendence of the missionaries from the American Board.

In New Holland and New Zealand, the Church Missionary Society have five missionaries, nineteen assistants, six teachers and 200 scholars. The Methodists support two or three missionaries in these places, and as many assistants; and have a large number of communicants in New South Wales.

The islands in the Indian Archipelago are Sumatra, Java, Borneo, the Moluccas and the Phillippines. The London Missionary Society has a mission at Batavia, and are printing and circulating books among the inhabitants. At Sumatra the Baptists have a missionary establishment at which they are translating the Scriptures. The Netherlands Missionary Society have missions at Java, Celebe, Amboyna, and several small islands. In eight island they have 50 teachers, and not less than 1,000 scholars. The aggregate numbers engaged in all the missions in this division of the globe, are 53 missionaries, 66 assistants, 41 native assistants, above 2,600 communicants, 663 native teachers, and between fifty and sixty thousand scholars belonging to their schools.

The population of *America* has been estimated at 39,000,000; of which, those who speak English are the most numerous, those next in numbers are the Spanish, next to them the native Indians, then the Portuguese, then the French, and lastly the Danish, Dutch, Swedish, and Russian.

In the West Indies the gospel continues successful, and the



missions established there towards the close of the last century are still flourishing. In twenty of these islands the Methodists have, missionaries 59, assistants 50, of white communicants, about 1000, of free blacks 7000, of slaves 24,085, children receiving instruction, 10,000.

The Moravians have in the West Indies, 35,000 negroes under the care of their missionaries, 12,400 of whom are communicants, and 7,000 baptized children. They have in these stations 50 missionaries, and nearly as many assistants.

The Netherlands Missionary Society has two missionaries in these islands, the Scottish Society has three, and the London Society two; and besides several hundred communicants, the scholars belonging to their schools number nearly 1,000.

The Baptists have in Jamaica, eleven missionaries and 10,000 communicants. The General Baptist have at the same place, two missionaries and about 300 communicants, besides 1,000 inquirers. And the Church Missionary Society has in Jamaica, Antigua, Demerara, and Essequibo, four European teachers, 14 native teachers, and above 300 scholars. The whole number of missionaries in the West Indies, is 130, of assistants 100, of communicants between fifty and sixty thousand, and above 10,000 scholars.

The whole number of Indians within the limits of the United States, is supposed to be about 300,000. The number of missionary stations among the Indians throughout North America is 145. These include tribes in, Labrador, Upper Canada, and in New York State; the Cherokees, Wyandotts, Choctaws, Osage, Putawatomes, Machinaws, Chickasaws, and others. The missions among them are conducted by the following Societies: namely, The American Board of Missions, American Baptist Board, Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Episcopal Missionary Society, Cumberland Presbyterians,\* and Moravians or United Brethren. The number of missionaries in all the stations is 200, of assistants 317, of communicants, between eight and ten thousand, and above 3,000 in the schools.

The Home Missionaries belonging to the churches in the United States, are more numerous than those in foreign stations.

Whole number of Bible Societies throughout the world is about 5,000. Bibles, and parts of Bibles, distributed, not far from nine millions, in 160 languages.

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\* The Cumberland Presbyterian Mission among the Choctaws has ceased, owing to the removal of the Indians. A Cumberland Presbyterian minister, the Rev. D. Lowry, is now laboring among the Winebagoes.

Between one hundred and fifty, and one hundred and sixty millions of tracts have been circulated by means of tract societies.

Number of Sabbath scholars throughout the world is not far from two millions.

The following brief sketch of the principal Foreign Missionary Societies throughout the world, is taken from Horn's Letters by Spaulding:

*I. Christian Knowledge Society.*—The Society for propagating Christian Knowledge, was incorporated in England by the British Parliament in 1647. In 1809, the society employed 9 missionaries. In 1831, it sustained missions in India and South Africa. In the schools of four of the India stations, they have under their instruction 2,840 scholars.

*II. Gospel Propagation Society.*—The Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, was instituted in 1801, by members of the established Church of England. Of this society, as we have no recent report, we can only say, that in North America, the East and West Indies, and on the continent of Europe, it employs about 160 missionaries, 100 school teachers and catechists, and supports 4 colleges, in Barbadoes, Hungary, Calcutta, and Nova Scotia, at an annual expense of about \$46,000.

*III. Moravian Missionary Society.*—The United Brethren commenced their missionary operations in 1732. In 1831, they had missions in Greenland and Labrador, in North America, Dutch Guiana, in South America, the British and Danish West Indies, and South Africa. In these missions were 41 stations, 209 missionaries, and about 600 converts. Receipts during the year 1830, \$49,113.

*IV. Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.*—In 1786, the Wesleyan Methodists commenced their missionary labours. In 1776, the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL. D. a clergyman of the church of England, and a graduate of the University of Oxford, formed an intimate friendship with Mr. John Wesley, and entered cordially into his views of extending the gospel, by every possible means to those who were living without a practical knowledge of divine truth. To the end of his days he continued in the strictest union with the Methodists, and was their principal agent in the establishment and direction of their numerous important missions, and finally closed his zealous missionary life during a voyage to Ceylon, whilst accompanying the first Wesleyan missionaries appointed at that island. The zealous efforts of this society have been crowned with success unparalleled in the history of missions. In July 30, 1834, the missions under their direction were as follows: Europe—In



Ireland 16, Sweden 1, France 4, Mediterranean 3. Asia—In Continental India 4, Ceylon 11, South Seas 11. Africa—In South Africa 5, Caffraland 9, Western Africa 3. America—West Indies 43, British dominions in North America 67, of which 12 are among the Indians of Upper Canada. In the several portions of the world connected with the society's operations, there are 177 mission stations, 257 regular missionaries, of whom the 232 are in foreign stations, 29 assistants, exclusive of school teachers and the wives of the missionaries. Communicants, 48,304. This number does not include the missions in Ireland, nor the new missions in Upper Canada.

V. *Baptist Missionary Society*.—This society was established in England in 1795. It has missions in the South Sea Islands, India, China, the Mediterranean, South Africa and its Islands, South America, and the Persian Empire; in which were in 1832, 113 stations and out-stations, 92 missionaries, 19 European and 133 native assistants, 4,771 communicants, 391 schools, and 22,193 scholars. Receipts, \$160,000.

VI. *Scottish Missionary Society*.—This society was organized in 1796. It has established missions in Karess, and Astrachan, in Western Asia, Bombay, Bankote, Hurnce and Poonah, in Western India, and in New South Wales. It has 9 missionaries employed and several assistants, and about 3000 children under instruction.

VII. *Church Missionary Society*.—In 1800 this society was established in England. In 1831 it had missions in Northern, Southern, and Western India, Ceylon, Austral-Asia, the Mediterranean, Western Africa, the West Indies, and Northwest America; in which are 56 stations, 54 European and 4 native missionaries, 545 teachers, 453 of whom are natives, 370 schools in which are 12,711 scholars.

VIII. *London Jews' Society*.—This society was formed in 1808. In England, France, Switzerland, Holland, Germany, Prussia, Poland and the Mediterranean, it employed, in 1832, 34 Missionaries and 9 agents and school teachers. Of the 34 Missionaries, 13 are converted Jews.

IX. *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*.—This society was organized in 1810. In October 1834, the missions under its direction were as follows: In the Mediterranean 11, West Africa 1, Ceylon 11, Western India 5, Siam 3, China 2, Indian Archipelago 2, Sandwich Islands 21, North American Indians 28; in which were employed 96 Missionaries, 197 assistants, 39 of whom are natives. Communicants 2000. In the schools under their care, 40,000 scholars. Receipts for the year, \$152,350.

**X. Baptist Foreign Missionary Society.**—The Baptist Board of Foreign Missions for the United States, was instituted in 1814. They have under their care the present year (1834) 19 Mission stations—in Burmah 6, in Siam 1, among the American Indians 11, and in France 1. In these Missions they employ 24 missionaries, and 63 assistants and teachers, 19 of whom are natives. Communicants, 1800.—Receipts for the year, not including donations from the American Bible and Tract Societies, \$52,051 91.

**XI. German Missionary Society.**—This society was organized in 1816. In the Medeterranean, Asiatic Russia, and Western Africa they employ 12 Missionaries, and about the same number of assistants.

**XII. General Baptist Missionary Society.**—This society was formed in England in 1816. It has 2 mission stations in Orissa, Northern India, employing three missionaries, and several assistants.

**XIII. Methodist Episcopal Missionary Society.**—The Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was organized in 1819. It now (1834) has missions in Liberia, Western Africa, employing 2 missionaries and 6 assistants. It has 14 missions among the aborigines of America, 1 of which is beyond the Rocky Mountains, employing 25 missionaries and 16 school teachers, having under their care 672 scholars. Communicants, 4,066—besides which there are between 7 and 8,000 reared up under the fostering care of this society, who are now embraced in the Wesleyan Conference of Canada. It has also 74 domestic missions within the bounds of the several conferences, exclusive of those that have been returned as regular circuits, employing 75 missionaries. Communicants, 8,820. Total, 90 stations, 100 missionaries, 22 teachers, 627 scholars and 11,889 communicants. Receipts for the year \$37,387 69.

**XIV. Episcopal Missionary Society.**—This society was formed in 1820, and has one mission at Athens, in Greece, employing 2 missionaries.

**XV. French Protestant Missionary Society.**—This society, which was formed in 1823, had in 1831, 4 missions in South Africa, employing 6 missionaries and 3 assistants.

**XVI. Serampore Baptist Missionary Society.**—In 1827 the Baptists of Serampore withdrew from their brethren in England, by reason of some misunderstanding relative to their mission premises. The Serampore brethren have now 16 mission stations in Northern India, employing in 1833, 27 missionaries and 15 native preachers.

**XVII. Netherland.s Missionary Society.**—In 1828 this society



commenced its missionary operations in China. They have 1 mission, employing 1 missionary and several assistants.

XVIII. *Rhenish Missionary Society*.—This society was formed in 1829. It has 2 missions in South Africa employing 6 missionaries and some assistants.

XIX. *Church of Scotland Missionary Society*.—This society, established in 1830, has a mission in Calcutta, and a mission school attached to it, employing 2 teachers and assistants.

XX. *Western Foreign Missionary Society*.—This society was organized in 1832. It has 1 mission in Liberia, Western Africa, and 1 missionary.

XXI. *Glasgow Missionary Society*.—This society has 2 missions and 4 missionaries in Southern Africa.

In all the above named missions there are employed at least 1132 missionaries, about 1600 assistants and teachers; connected with which, are about 150,000 converts from heathenism.





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**HISTORY**  
**OF THE**  
**CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.**

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**BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH,**  
**Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.**

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# HISTORY

OF THE

## CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

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### CHAPTER I.

FIRST SETTLERS OF GREEN RIVER AND CUMBERLAND COUNTRIES—STATE OF THE CHURCH—M'GREADY—COMMENCEMENT OF THE REVIVAL.

IN giving a history of the origin of this young branch of the Church of Christ, it will be proper to relate the causes, which finally rendered it necessary for its founders to secede from the communion of the Presbyterian Church; and to establish a new denomination of Christians.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church had its origin among the early settlers of the Green River country in Kentucky, and the Cumberland country in Tennessee. The early inhabitants of this beautiful and fertile region, consisted of a heterogenous mass, who, from the glowing descriptions that were given of the richness of its soil, and the salubrity of its climate, had flowed into it, from all quarters of the Union, especially from Virginia, and the Carolinas. Surrounded on all sides by a dense forest, and a luxuriant country, the improvement and cultivation of which, promised fair to place them in easy and affluent circumstances, it is not surprising that the great majority of the inhabitants bent all their energies to the promotion of their temporal interests, to the neglect of what was vastly more important, a preparation for Eternity—especially when it is remembered, that at that time, owing to their isolated situation, they were in a great measure deprived of the means of grace, which their descendants so abundantly enjoy. It is true, that at a very

early period after the first settlement of the country, a few philanthropic, and devoted missionaries immigrated into this new, extensive field of labor, where they underwent severe trials, submitted to disagreeable privations; and at the risk of falling victims to the Indian tomahawk and scalping knife, they traveled from settlement to settlement proclaiming salvation through Christ Jesus to perishing sinners. Nor did they labor in vain, or spend their strength for naught; for they were often blessed with precious out-pourings of God's Spirit, and through their instrumentality many souls were brought unto the fold of Christ. But the number of such men was exceedingly small, when compared to the vast field before them, which was enlarging every year; and unfortunately, many who called themselves the ministers of the Gospel, removed into this country, who were in all things the reverse of those mentioned above. Some were strangers to that change of heart, without which, all pretensions to be called, and sent of God, to point perishing sinners to Jesus Christ, are but impious mockery; and others proved by their conduct that they possessed but little of the Spirit of the Gospel.\*

Like priest, like people, is a trite, yet true saying; and in this region at that period, although here and there, a true Nathaniel, and a humble and devoted Mary were to be found; yet many of the professed followers of Christ had a name to live, when they were dead in trespasses and sins.—These remarks are especially applicable to the members of the Presbyterian Church, a fearful number of whom, appear to have been strangers to true godliness. The Rev. Mr. David Rice, the first Presbyterian minister that settled in Kentucky, gives the following dark picture of many, who possessed certificates of being in full communion in that Church: "Some were grossly ignorant of the first principles of religion: some were given to quarrelling and fighting: some to profane swearing: some to intemperance." Nor was this description of professed Christians confined to the region in which Mr. Rice resided; for in too many instances, such members of the Church were to be

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\*Of his first fellow laborers in Kentucky, Mr. Rice says, "they were men of some information, and held sound principles, but did not appear to possess much of the spirit of the gospel."



found in the Green River and Cumberland countries, as the sequel will show. Indeed, at that period, the Presbyterian Church in the west, appears to have been in a wretched state of coldness and formality. "The services of the Sanctuary were long, unedifying, and irksome; and the communicants, with a very few exceptions, were confined to the heads of families."\* Such being the state of the church, it is not surprising that the men of the world should treat the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ with neglect and contempt; and that society should be prone to Infidelity, Atheism, and every evil work.

Such was the darkly ominous state of the religious atmosphere of the then far west, when in addition to the few evangelical and devoted ministers (chiefly Methodists,) already in the field, in the year A. D. 1797, God, in his merciful providence, sent into this moral wilderness, that evangelical, holy, devoted and powerful minister of the gospel, James M'Gready, whose memory will ever be dear, not only to all who bear the Cumberland Presbyterian name, but to all sincere followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who have a correct knowledge of his labors of love, and their blessed results.

Mr. M'Gready was born in North Carolina, in the year A. D. 1763, of respectable parents, who had emigrated from Ireland. Very little is known to the author of his infancy and youth, except, that at an early age, he was admitted into the communion of the Presbyterian Church, and became a candidate for the gospel ministry. Shortly after, he removed to western Pennsylvania, where he placed himself under the tuition of Dr. M'Millan, who was founder of Jefferson College. Here, with great diligence, he applied himself to study, and made considerable proficiency. But although he was a member of the visible church, and preparing for the ministry, Mr. M'Gready was not, at that time, a member of the mystical body of Christ. God, in his tender compassion, convinced him of his state of spiritual death, in the following manner :

On a certain occasion, at the house of a friend, he fell into the society of two evangelical Christians of his acquaintance. On retiring for the night, they were all shewn into the

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\*Dr. Cleland.

same room; Mr. M'Gready to one bed, and the two friends to another. These two Christians entered into conversation on experimental and practical religion. By and by, believing that Mr. M'Gready was asleep, they freely expressed to each other, their views of his religious character; they pronounced him a mere formalist, and a stranger to regenerating grace. He, however, being awake, overheard all that was said concerning him; and instead of becoming offended, as too many professed Christians would have been, by the Spirit of God, he was thereby led to a close and candid examination of the state of his heart, which happily for him and for the church of Christ, resulted in the conviction, that although he had a name to live, yet he was dead in trespasses and sins; and justly exposed to the wrath of God. He now earnestly sought an interest in the blood of Atonement, and from his MSS. it appears, that in the year A. D. 1786, on a Sabbath morning, at a sacramental meeting, near the Monongahala, he was savingly converted to God.

Three years after the date of his conversion, we find Mr. M'Gready in North Carolina, preaching Christ to perishing sinners in great power and demonstration of the Spirit. From his MSS. it appears, the design of most of his discourses at that time, was to drive unregenerate professors from their refuges of lies; and in all, he dwelt upon the necessity of the new birth. What is worthy of remark, he insisted upon the importance of knowing the time when, and the place where, the saving change is experienced. Such was his zeal for God, and the heavenly unction that attended his ministrations, wherever he went he attracted the attention of very large congregations; and by the blessing of God attending the word preached, many precious souls passed from death unto life. His labors at an Academy under the care of Dr. Caldwell, were instrumental in producing a revival of religion, in which ten or twelve young men were brought into the fold; all of whom became ministers of the Gospel, and some of them were subsequently his fellow-laborers in the far west.

Having married an intelligent lady, who was a member of the Presbyterian Church, about the year 1790, Mr. M'Gready became pastor of a congregation in Orange county, where he la-



bored with his former zeal, and often with great success. Here, however, he encountered much opposition from the openly profane, and also from nominal professors of religion; the former being offended at his fearful denunciations of the wrath of God against impenitent sinners; and the latter, at his plain, heart searching exposures of their unsound foundations. The cry was raised against him, he is running the people distracted, diverting their attention from their necessary avocations; and creating in the minds of decent, orderly, moral people, unnecessary alarm about the eternal destiny of their souls. Thus circumstanced it is not surprising, that he had to submit to many insults from those very persons, for whose benefit he so faithfully labored. But Mr. M'Gready felt conscious that he was in the discharge of duty, and true to his trust, he continued to cry aloud—exposed sin in its horrid deformity—pointed out its fearful consequences, and held up Christ before sinners as their only hope and refuge. Satan who was exceedingly mad at the faithfulness of this servant of the living God, and at the success that attended his ministrations, rallied his forces, and resolved to drive him from the field. To effect this purpose, a letter was written to him in *blood*, requiring him to leave the country at the peril of his life; and a number of wicked men and women of the baser sort, on a certain occasion during the week, assembled in his church, tore down the seats, set fire to the pulpit, and burnt it to ashes.

On the following Sabbath, when Mr. M'Gready and the congregation assembled at the house of God, they found all within, in confusion and desolation. Not at all intimidated by these diabolical proceedings, on commencing the services, he gave out these very appropriate lines from Dr. Watts:

Will God forever cast us off?

His wrath forever smoke

Against the people of his love,

His little chosen flock?

Think of the tribes so dearly bought

With their Redeemer's blood;

Nor let thy Zion be forgot

Where once thy glory stood.

Lift up thy feet and march in haste,  
Aloud our ruin calls;  
See what a wide and fearful waste  
Is made within thy walls.

Where once thy churches pray'd and sang  
Thy foes profanely roar;  
Over thy gates their ensigns hang,  
Sad tokens of their power.

How are the seats of worship broke!  
They tear thy buildings down,  
And he that deals the heaviest stroke  
Procures the chief renown.

With flames they threaten to destroy  
Thy children in their nest;  
Come let us burn at once, they cry,  
The temple and the priest.

After the singing of which, he addressed the congregation from Matthew xxiii. 37, 38. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

In A. D. 1796, and shortly after this outrage had been committed, Mr. M'Gready determined to leave this congregation, in consequence of a call from some of his former hearers, who had removed to Logan county, Kentucky. On his way to his new destination, he halted in the vicinity of Knoxville, East Tennessee, where he remained several months, preaching with power and energy, and was honored by the Head of the Church, by being instrumental in awakening and converting many precious souls, who will be his crown of rejoicing in the great day of Jesus Christ. When Mr. M'Gready arrived in Logan county, Kentucky, he became the pastor of three small congregations, viz: Gasper River, Red River, and Muddy River societies; all of which were in a state of coldness and declension, and many of the members strangers to regeneration. Indeed the questions often put to Mr. M'Gready shew that his churches were



nearly destitute of spiritual life, it being not uncommon for him to be asked such questions as the following: "Is religion a sensible thing? If I were converted, would I feel it and know it?" Mr. M'Gready, who was a man of fervent piety, deep humility, and persevering in his supplications at a throne of Grace, could not remain in a state of listlessness in this valley of the shadow of death; but determined, in the strength of Israel's God, to arouse the people from their dangerous lethargy: and as immortal souls were every day sinking into perdition, he not only raised the alarm, but he also adopted and practised such measures as were most likely, under the blessing of God, to insure success and result in a revival of religion, and the salvation of perishing sinners. He laid before the few living Christians of his charges, the desolations of Zion, the promises of their covenant God, and the efficacy of faithful, persevering and effectual prayer. When their zeal for the cause of Christ was excited, and their love for the souls of their fellow men was inflamed, he presented for their approval and signature, the following preamble and covenant:

"When we consider the word and promises of a compassionate God, to the poor lost family of Adam, we find the strongest encouragement for Christians to pray in faith—to ask in the name of Jesus for the conversion of their fellow men. None ever went to Christ, when on earth, with the case of their friends that were denied, and, although the days of his humiliation are ended, yet for the encouragement of his people, he has left it on record, that where two or three agree, upon earth, to ask in prayer, *believing*, it shall be done. Again, *whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son*. With these promises before us, we feel encouraged to unite our supplications to a prayer hearing God, for the outpouring of his spirit, that his people may be quickened and comforted, and that our children, and sinners generally, may be converted. Therefore, we bind ourselves to observe the third Saturday of each month, for one year, as a day of fasting and prayer, for the conversion of sinners in Logan county, and throughout the world. We also engage to spend one half hour every Saturday evening, beginning at the setting of the sun, and

one half hour every Sabbath morning, at the rising of the sun, in pleading with God to revive his work."

To this he and they affixed their names; having thus solemnly pledged themselves to God and each other, with a humble reliance upon the promises of Jehovah; both preacher and people betook themselves to fervent, and persevering prayer. Mr. M'Gready in his public exhibitions at this time, uniformly preached repentance, faith, and *regeneration*. A favorite subject with him was from Daniel, v. 27. "TEKEL, Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting;" by the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit attending this discourse, many members of the church became secretly convinced, their hope was that of the hypocrite, which shall perish. At first, rage, and hatred of the preacher took possession of their minds; but numbers were subsequently converted to God. In the meanwhile, Mr. M'Gready had unusual liberty in preaching the word, for God aided him, and answered the prayers of the faithful band, who were thus holding up his hands.

In May A. D. 1797, which was the spring after he settled in Logan county, this man of God began to see some of the fruit of his labors, in the conversion of a female member of the church in full communion, who found that her hope of salvation was false and delusive, upon which she became deeply convicted, and in a short time obtained peace and joy in believing. On experiencing this happy change from death unto life, and no doubt moved upon by the Holy Spirit, this new-born Christian visited her relatives, friends, and neighbors, from house to house; warned them of their danger, and earnestly exhorted them to repent, and seek an interest in the blood of Jesus. This conversion, and the laudable zeal of its subject, was blessed of God to the awakening of many precious souls. And now the whole congregation appeared to become interested, and almost every discourse delivered, was instrumental in awakening sinners. This encouraging state of affairs continued during the summer; but in the fall of the year, a general deadness began to prevail, which continued until the following July. When on the Monday of a sacramental meeting, God was graciously pleased again to pour out his Spirit, on this favored congrega-



tion. The consequence was, that most of the families in the neighborhood became deeply impressed with a sense of their ruined condition, and their perishing need of an interest in Christ Jesus: during the following week, they almost entirely neglected their secular affairs, owing to their great solicitude to obtain salvation.

Heretofore, the gracious out pourings of the Holy Spirit were confined to the congregation on Gasper River: but, in September, A. D. 1798, the two other congregations under the pastoral care of Mr. M'Gready, also experienced refreshing times from the presence of the Lord. Christians were strengthened and comforted. The people listened to the Gospel, as for Eternity, and the general topic of conversation, at home and abroad, was the salvation of the Soul. Thus, in answer to the faithful, and persevering prayers of a few devoted Christians, did the Head of the Church commence a work of grace, which was destined to gladden the hearts of thousands; and lead many wandering sinners from the road of death, to the climes of Eternal Felicity. But in no age of the world, has a true revival appeared, without having to encounter opposition. Satan will not yield his dominion over the hearts of men without a struggle, and as he is exceedingly crafty, and an adept at the work of destruction, in attempting to effect his purposes, he always choses those instruments, most likely to be successful. So it proved in the present instance, for while these infant churches were in this very interesting and critical situation, a person from a distance visited them, not as a messenger of peace, not to strengthen the hands of the pastor and his people, but to sow the seeds of discord, to blast the opening prospects of the children of God, and to prevent immortal souls from being snatched as brands from the burnings. Nor was this man an avowed enemy of the Kingdom of Christ, but one professing to hold a commission from the court of Heaven, as ambassador of the Lord of Glory to guilty men. Nor did he belong to another sectary, but was a member of the same denomination and attached to the same Presbytery to which these churches belonged; consequently he was under great obligations to promote the work. But instead of endeavoring to bring perishing sinners to the foot of the Cross, the Rev. James Balch had no sooner arrived, than he commenced

opposing the doctrines preached, viz: Faith, Repentance, and *Regeneration*. He ridiculed the whole work of the revival, formed a considerable party, and involved these young churches in disputation and confusion. In consequence of which the whole work was stopped, and the people sunk back into a state of darkness and deadness. The author of this calamity has long since gone to render an account of his stewardship to the Judge of quick and dead. Charity says let his name sink into oblivion; but his subsequent conduct in opposing the revival, and the part he with others of a like spirit acted, in relation to the unhappy difficulties which reduced the founders of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church to form a new denomination, render it necessary in justice to the characters of the friends of the revival that it should be recorded, especially as it must again appear, as the persevering opposer of the revival members of Cumberland Presbytery, and of their measures, perhaps he acted conscientiously, the Judgment of the great day will alone reveal whether in these proceedings he did the will of his Master; but to return.

Although for a short time God withdrew from these congregations the manifestations of his grace, yet he had not forsaken them, but again blessed them with the out pourings of his Spirit during a sacramental occasion at Red River Church, in July, A. D. 1799. Great solemnity pervaded the assembled throng from first to last, particularly on Monday, the presence of God had an overwhelming influence upon the congregation. The most bold and daring sinners in the country hid their faces, and wept bitterly; and such were the deep impressions made upon their minds, that when the congregation was dismissed many staid around the doors of the church, unwilling to retire. Upon observing this, Mr. McGready again had them collected in the house, and addressed the Throne of Grace in their behalf. When this was done, to use his own strong language—"The mighty power of God came upon us like a shower from the everlasting hills; the people of God were quickened and comforted. Yea, some of them were filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory; sinners were powerfully alarmed, and some precious souls were brought to feel the pardoning love of Jesus."

In August following, a meeting of the same nature was held



at Gasper River Church, which Mr. M'Gready styles *one of the days of the Son of Man*. On Monday especially, the sensible presence of God rendered the assembly awfully solemn; great attention was paid to the preaching of the word, and when the exercises were closed, and the benediction pronounced, instead of leaving the church, and dispersing as usual, the whole assembly kept their seats and remained for sometime in deep and solemn silence. But presently some had such clear views of the corruptions of their hearts, the sinfulness of their lives, and their exposure to misery, that they were constrained to cry for mercy; some were so overwhelmed with a sense of their guilt, and the presence of that Holy God against whom they had rebelled, that they fell from their seats upon the floor, and there lay in agony, pleading for the pardon, of their innumerable transgressions. Such were the heart piercing influences of the Holy Spirit, that not only those who made no profession of an interest in the blood of Christ were thus affected, but some who were members of the church were overwhelmed with the presence of God, and could not withstand the mighty influence of the truth, but were thoroughly convinced, that their hope of salvation was delusive, and they guilty unregenerate sinners condemned to death. When these effects were produced, the ministers of the Gospel passed among the assembly, addressed them individually, and entreated all to make their peace with God through Christ Jesus. Mr. M'Gready says, while thus employed, a woman who was in deep distress sent for him, and thus addressed him—"Sir, I lived in your congregation in North Carolina, I was a member of the church in full communion, but I was deceived, I have no religion, I am going to hell." He also relates that an aged man in great distress addressed his wife and children in the following language:—"We are all going to hell together, we have lived prayerless and ungodly lives, the work of our souls is yet to begin, we must get religion or we will all be damned."

In September, another sacramental meeting was held at Muddy River Church, attended by the same gracious manifestations of the presence of God. Many were awakened to a sense of their sin and danger, and some obtained an interest in the privileges of the sons of God.

As the small rivulet that issues from the mountain side and winds its devious way over rocks, crags and dales, gradually enlarging as it glides along, until it becomes a deep and broad river, spreading luxuriance and plenty over the regions through which it flows, and finally empties itself into the ocean, covered with vessels laden with rich cargoes. So did this gracious revival first break forth in three small congregations, situated in obscure settlements, almost at the extremity of civilization; and notwithstanding the powers of earth and hell combined to stop its course, and sink it in oblivion; yet over all barriers and obstacles it forced its way, gradually enlarging as it flowed, communicating pardon, peace, and the hope of eternal life to many perishing sinners, until it became a mighty flood and caused its hallowed and refreshing influence to be felt, throughout the valley of the Mississippi. Already have many thousands been wafted by it to the realms of Glory, and we trust it will continue to flow on, refreshing the hearts of millions yet unborn, until not only this great and rising empire shall be Evangelized, but all men shall become the subjects of our Immanuel, and the whole earth will be filled with his Glory.



## CHAPTER II.

PROGRESS OF THE REVIVAL—COMMENCES IN CUMBERLAND COUNTRY—OPPOSITION TO IT—ADDITIONAL LABORERS—ANDERSON, EWING, AND KING INTRODUCED INTO THE MINISTRY—THE PROPRIETY OF THE MEASURES OF THE REVIVAL MINISTERS IN THAT AFFAIR—SUCCESS OF THE NEW LABORERS—THE REVIVAL IN UPPER KENTUCKY—WILD DELUSIONS ENCOURAGED THERE—FALLING DOWN—THE JERKS.

THE gracious work of God, in which the Cumberland Presbyterians had their origin, is usually termed the great revival of 1800, not that it first appeared that year, for as we have just related it commenced two years before. But what was then experienced, was only as the first fruits before the plentiful harvest is gathered home. Previous to the year A. D. 1800, the work was confined to the three congregations of which Mr. M'Gready took the pastoral charge on his arrival in Kentucky: but this year it burst forth in meridian splendor, and its hallowed influences were spread far and wide. The first refreshing season experienced this year, was during a sacramental occasion at Red River Church, in June; which Mr. M'Gready relates, was the greatest time these churches had yet experienced. Much solemnity pervaded the congregation, and great attention was given to the preaching of the word. On Sabbath, under the ministrations of the Rev. John M'Gee, an evangelical and spiritual minister of the Methodist church, a most gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit was experienced. On Monday, many had such clear and heart piercing views of their sinfulness, and the danger to which they were exposed, that they fell prostrate on the floor, and their cries filled the house. In all quarters those who had been the most outbreacking sinners, were to be seen laying on the floor unable to help themselves, and anxiously enquiring what they should do to be saved. In a word, persons of all classes, and of all ages were to be seen in agonies, and heard crying for redemption in the blood of Lamb: twelve

precious souls, during the occasion, professed to have passed from death unto life; and many left the place pungently convicted of their sin and danger.

THE FIRST CAMP MEETING IN CHRISTENDOM was held in July, at the Gasper River Church. It is worthy of remark, that the gracious work first commenced in this church, and although the other two congregations had been blessed with times of awakening and refreshing; yet the effect of them had been, in a great measure confined to their immediate vicinities: but from this congregation, and from the first camp meeting, the revival spirit went forth, which diffused itself throughout the churches of the West, and resulted in the conversion of thousands of immortal souls, and caused its influence to be felt not only in the valley of the Mississippi, but also on the coast of the Atlantic, particularly in the Carolinas.

The influence of camp meetings on the inhabitants of the western country has been immense, thousands, and tens of thousands, on these occasions have professed to pass from death unto life. Meetings of this nature are now held in almost all parts of the United States, and by different denominations. They have been held for years by a certain class of Methodists in England; and an attempt has been made to introduce them into Scotland, and in the vicinity of Edinburgh its capital. But, very few are acquainted with their origin, which has been traced to various causes, by curious speculators on the subject. Although it is true that the Jews on many occasions, held such convocations; and multitudes assembled in the wilderness, where they remained for days, hearing the heavenly discourses of Him, who spake as never man spake: yet in these latter days, such meetings were not in use until they were introduced by Mr. McGready.

A person whose varacity and piety are unquestioned and who resided in the vicinity of Gasper River congregation, when the revival first appeared there; some years ago, gave us the following relation concerning the origin of the first camp meeting.\* "A family consisting of a father and his seven daughters, had removed from one of the Carolinas, to Logan county—shortly

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\* The late Captain Estil, of Winchester, Tennessee.



after their arrival they were informed of the *strange* work that had appeared in Mr. M'Gready's congregations; and that a sacramental meeting was about to be held at Gasper River church. They felt solicitous to be present, but as they resided at some distance from the place of meeting, and were strangers in the country, they felt unwilling to impose themselves on the hospitality of those who were unacquainted with them, and were about to abandon the thought of being present, when one of them said, they had often encamped by their wagon in the open air, while upon their journey, without sustaining any injury, and that to pursue the same course on the present occasion would subject them to no great inconvenience. The family went to the meeting in their wagon, provided with provisions for themselves and horses, and encamped near the church. By the close of the exercises most of them had professed to obtain an interest in the blood of the Atonement. This happy family returned home rejoicing in the Lord, and in the fulness of their hearts, declared to their neighbors the great things God had done for them. The curiosity of many became excited, and some were awakened to a sense of their danger; and hearing of another meeting, (we think at Muddy River church) two or three families went to it in their wagons, and most of the converts on the occasion were from this company. Mr. M'Gready observed the circumstance—believed it a token that God would bless such conduct—and urged upon the members of his congregations to request their friends at a distance to come to the meetings prepared to remain on the ground. Previous to the meeting at Gasper River in July, he had it proclaimed far and wide, that on that occasion he expected the people to encamp on the ground; and sent pressing invitations to ministers at a distance, to come and see this strange work, and to induce as many of their people as possible to be present." Whatever objections may be urged against camp meetings in the vicinity of large cities, and in densely populated countries, certainly the course pursued by M'Gready, on that occasion, was admirably calculated to promote the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom, among the early settlers of this western wilderness. At that period the country was but thinly inhabited; the settlements were comparatively few and at a distance from

each other. Indeed the blessed results of that meeting and hundreds that have followed it, clearly prove that in this affair, Mr. M'Gready had the approbation of Heaven. But to return.

The intelligence that a strange work was in progress in Logan county, had excited the curiosity of multitudes in the adjacent countries, and being encouraged by the invitations of Mr. M'Gready, a vast concourse of people flocked to the meeting, from the distance of twenty, thirty, fifty and even a hundred miles. In many instances, whole families went in their wagons, with provisions, &c. At this meeting, and indeed at all of the same nature for years afterwards, no cabins were erected for the accommodation of the people, as is now universally done at camp meetings, in this country. But the people sheltered themselves the best way they could—some slept in their wagons—others erected temporary tents covered with bed clothes &c. Their fare was of the most frugal kind, simply consisting of what was necessary to sustain nature. As the wagons arrived, they took their stations, so as to form a large square, near the centre of which, a temporary pulpit or stand was erected, formed of rough logs with a small hand-board for the convenience of the preachers. As many as possible of the assembled multitude were accommodated on seats, formed by placing on the ground, long logs, parallel, but at some distance, and above these, others roughly hewn, cross-wise. The ministers who occupied the pulpit on that occasion were James M'Gready, William M'Gee,\* and William Hodge,† with perhaps others of whom we have no certain knowledge. During the public exercises on Friday and Saturday, nothing more than a decent solemnity prevailed in the congregation; but on the evening of the latter day, two pious women were engaged conversing on the state of their souls, their views, feelings, prospects &c. which deeply affected those who were standing by. Instantly the divine flame spread through the whole multitude; many of the unconverted became so deeply affected that they fell powerless on the ground, and cried aloud for mercy. Ministers and pious christians passed among them, giving them instructions and encouragement to close with Christ, as he is

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\* See Appendix, A. † See Appendix, B.



offered in the Gospel. In this way the night was spent, and before Sabbath morning, a goodly number obtained peace and joy in believing. From this time the work continued to advance both day and night until Tuesday morning, when the meeting closed. The result was, that forty-five precious souls were believed to have passed from a state of nature to a state of grace; most of whom have gone to Eternity—but some yet remain: from that time to the present, they have sustained a credible profession of religion, and thereby have given satisfactory evidence, that they were converted to God in a genuine revival.

A few weeks after this meeting another of the same nature was held at Muddy River Church; at which, fifty persons professed to obtain an interest in the blood of Atonement. At both of these sacraments, many who did not profess to be born again, left them seriously awakened, and anxiously seeking the way of salvation. The young converts were the devoted friends of the work, and many sincere Christians who were present from motives of curiosity, and at first filled with prejudices, had them all removed—became quickened, revived, and strengthened. All these, on their return to their respective homes, were instrumental in arousing the attention of their respective neighborhoods; and in a short time the inhabitants of all the settlements in the Green River country were more or less visited with gracious out pourings of the Holy Spirit.

Consequences of a very important nature to the inhabitants of the Cumberland country resulted from the meeting at Gasper River Church, which was attended by great numbers from that region, especially from Shiloh congregation, at that time, under the pastoral care of Mr. Hodge; five of whose members in full communion, there became convinced that although they had a name to live, yet they were dead in trespasses and sins; and before they left the meeting obtained satisfactory evidence that their sins were pardoned, their iniquities covered, and their hearts changed. Others who previously had made no profession, were there converted to God, and the members of the church who were sincere Christians, were greatly revived and aroused to a proper sense of the importance of their stations. Among these, was the pastor himself, who re-

turned home praising God for what his eyes had seen, and his heart had felt, and resolving to do his utmost, as a humble instrument to advance the glorious work, in the region where he resided. The evening these members of Shiloh congregation reached their home, the work commenced there. A youth who at camp meeting had professed to obtain the forgiveness of his sins on his way to his fathers house, fell in company with a young associate; with deep concern he told him he was going down to hell. The boy, who was unaccustomed to such addresses, became greatly alarmed, ran home, and in a state of deep conviction, he sank down helpless, and almost speechless. In a very short time he obtained delivering grace, and to the astonishment of all present, he spake the praises of God, the wonders of redeeming love, and in the most earnest and affectionate manner, exhorted the unconverted to fly from the wrath to come. He called for one of his young friends, who, when he came forward, fell to the floor deeply convinced of his guilt and exposure to the wrath of God—presently he also burst forth in praises to the Most High. In consequence of these conversions, next morning the whole neighborhood was in a state of alarm; they met together for social prayer; during the exercises, some wept, others cried aloud for mercy, and more were added to the list of the converted. The work spread rapidly through the congregation, and by the Sabbath morning after the meeting at Gasper River, eighteen or twenty persons professed to be converted to God. Deists and formal professors opposed the blessed work, still, however, it prospered gloriously, and in a very short period, in almost every family of the neighborhood, some had either professed to have passed from death unto life, or were deeply awakened, with the exception of the families of the opposers.

In the meanwhile, Mr. M'Gready was actively and successfully engaged in promoting the work in Kentucky. At the solicitation of Mr. M'Gee, he visited one of his congregations, and on the first of September held another camp meeting, at the Ridge meeting house, which is situated near the road leading from Nashville to Bowlinggreen. On this occasion, great numbers attended from the Cumberland and Green River countries. The presence of God rendered the place awful and glorious,



and forty-five precious souls were hopefully brought into the fold of Christ.

The following week, Mr. M'Gready, William M'Gee, and his brother John M'Gee, a devoted and spiritual Methodist minister, aided Mr. Hodge in holding a camp meeting at Shiloh. The multitude that assembled from all quarters on this occasion was greater than at any previous meeting. The solemn exercises commenced on Friday evening, and were continued with some intervals, until Tuesday. On Sabbath evening the effect of the work on the vast multitude was awful beyond description—great numbers, by the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit, were struck prostrate on the earth—wherever the eye was turned, men and women were seen in this condition scattered all around; and their deep sighs, and heart rending groans, appeared to pierce the heavens. Very few were indifferent spectators—almost all present felt that the power of God was upon them. Some were under the first awakenings on account of sin; and others were earnestly engaged in struggling for deliverance: in this state they continued all night. On Monday morning a glorious resurrection began to take place among the spiritually dead; for a considerable time praises and thanksgivings for the conversion of some new-born souls were heard almost every minute, until they became incessant: finally the whole congregation was filled with joy and gladness. Neighbors and friends, parents and children, brothers and sisters, were locked in each other's arms, praising God for redemption through the blood of the Lamb. Those who previously were bitter enemies now cordially embraced each other in the bonds of peace. Mr. Hodge in a letter to Bishop Asbury, of the Methodist Church, stated that it was believed upwards of a hundred precious souls, at this meeting professed to find pardon and peace; and it is a pleasing reflection, that very few afterwards dishonored their profession.

For sometime after this camp meeting it was no unusual thing to hear of persons falling down suddenly upon the ground, owing to overpowering views of their guilt and exposure to misery. This sometimes transpired when they were alone in their fields, or travelling on the high road, or when at home in

their houses—a clear evidence that the work was produced by the mighty power of God.

In October, another camp meeting was held in Mr. Craighead's congregation, and although the pastor of the church was no friend to the revival, and viewed the exercises and professions of its subjects as the result of enthusiasm and wild fire; yet God was present in mighty power, and many were added to the church of such as shall be saved. This meeting was gotten up by some of the members of the congregation who had been converted at those that preceded it, some of whom are yet alive, who have informed us, that they had been years in the church, in full communion, but never knew what it was to be born again, until the glorious revival of 1800.—This meeting was followed by another at what is now called the Beech Church, in Sumner county, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. William M'Gee, who from first to last, was the fast friend of the revival; and whose labours of love were crowned with astonishing success. On this occasion upwards of forty persons obtained a good hope of eternal life through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Thus did this blessed work of God, in the year A.D. 1800, burst forth in meridian strength, and diffuse its healing influences through the Cumberland and Green River countries; transforming a moral wilderness into the garden of the Lord. The ensuing winter, the ball gave way to the social prayer meeting—the loud unthinking laugh and foolish jest, to the voice of praise and thanksgiving. Nor was the blessed work retarded by the chilling blast and biting frost. It still progressed prospering and to prosper; and many poor wandering sinners were brought into the fold of Christ.

In the spring of 1801, as soon as the return of pleasant weather permitted, the revival ministers were early in the field, travelling from congregation to congregation, proclaiming salvation to perishing sinners through Christ Jesus. In March, at a sacramental meeting in Shiloh congregation, another gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit was experienced; in which thirty or forty precious souls enlisted under the banners of Immanuel. The congregations on Goose and Cedar



Creeks, were also at this time graciously visited, and in all the neighboring settlements, more or less were converted to God, or powerfully awakened. The effects of the work were harmony and love among Christians of the different denominations, particularly the Presbyterians and Methodists, both preachers and people united their energies to promote the cause of their common Lord; and every succeeding month witnessed powerful revivals of religion. Nor were the brethren in Kentucky, indulging in sloth and indolence, but actively engaged; especially at their camp meetings, which were now beginning to be held in almost all the larger congregations, and at them, the power of God was displayed in awakening the thoughtless, bringing the inquiring to an interest in the blood of Sprinkling, and comforting, and strengthening the weak believer. But to enter upon a detailed account of the progress of the work, would only fatigue the reader; suffice it therefore to say, that it continued to spread far and wide, and hundreds who before had been living without God in the world, were brought to bow at the foot of the Cross; and light, life, joy, and thanksgiving were heard through the Green River and Cumberland countries, which before this work commenced was comparable only to the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel's vision.

Much opposition was manifested to the revival from its first commencement, and what is worthy of remark, its most violent opposers were avowed Deists, and professors of religion. Some of the latter no doubt, were sincere Christians, but having never before witnessed such astonishing displays of the power of God, they attributed the whole to Satanic influence, and treated the exercises as the result of enthusiasm and fanaticism—while others who were members of the visible church but had never experienced the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit, thought that religion consisted simply in the holding of certain orthodox doctrines, and a moral life; these were offended at the zeal displayed by both ministers and people, who professed to have experienced a change of heart, to which they were strangers. To be blessed with transforming views of the character and perfections of God in Christ Jesus, they thought incompatible with the condition of man in the present

state, and ridiculed those who professed to enjoy them as fanatics and madmen. It is a lamentable truth; that from first to last, throughout the bounds of the Cumberland and Green River countries, there were only five Presbyterian ministers who were friendly to the work, viz: M'Gready, Hodge, M'Gee, M'Adow, and Rankin, all the others opposed it from its first appearance; and although sometimes they would go with the current, yet they were always known to be unfriendly to it, and used their influence to discountenance and to crush it. Nevertheless God graciously blessed his humble and devoted servants, who regardless of all opposition, and the most arduous labors, continued to promote the revival, and had the happiness of seeing the whole country undergoing a glorious reformation.

But the field soon became so extensive, that it was impossible for these men to supply one third of their congregations with the means of grace. While they were in this condition, the Rev. David Rice, at that time the most aged Presbyterian minister in Kentucky, who was then a member of the same Presbytery with themselves, though not a resident of the country in which the revival prevailed, attended a sacramental meeting with the revival ministers in one of the vacant congregations; and being informed of the destitute state of most the churches, and the pressing demands for the means of grace, earnestly recommended that they should choose from among the laity, some men who appeared to possess talents and a disposition to exercise their gifts publicly, to preach the Gospel, although they might not have acquired that degree of education required by the book of discipline. This proposition was cordially approved of by both preachers and people who could discover no means of being supplied with the preaching of the Gospel, unless they applied for the ministrations of those who belonged to other denominations. What still more clearly convinced them of the propriety of this measure was, that in almost every congregation that had been blessed with the outpourings of the Holy Spirit, there were one or more intelligent and spiritual men, whose gifts in exhortation had already been honored by the Head of the Church in awakening, and convert-



ing precious souls. Accordingly three zealous, intelligent, and influential members of the church, viz: Alexander Anderson,\* Finis Ewing, and Samuel King, were encouraged by the revival ministers to prepare written discourses, and to present themselves before the Transylvania Presbytery at its sessions in October 1891. All these persons had previously been under serious impressions that it was their duty to devote themselves to the ministry; but as they had not enjoyed the advantage of a collegiate education, and were men of families, and somewhat advanced in life; they had been laboring under difficulties on account of their not possessing the literary attainments required by the discipline of the church, and which, circumstanced as they were, it was utterly impossible to obtain.

Mr. Anderson has long ago gone to the enjoyment of a glorious inheritance at the right hand of God: therefore, without a breach of delicacy, we may freely express the views entertained of him by the religious community among whom he labored so successfully, during the very short period he was spared to the church upon earth. All who knew him concur in a united testimony, that he was a man of extraordinary powers of mind—that he possessed an extensive knowledge of human nature—that he was very intelligent—that he had an intimate acquaintance with his bible, and possessed very clear views of the doctrines of the Cross—that he was peculiarly conciliating in his manners, so much so, that wherever he went, he won upon the affections of all parties; and commanded the respect of both the friends and the foes of the revival—that he was a peculiarly interesting speaker, and during his short career he was behind none of the more aged ministers, in spirituality and extensive usefulness—and above all, that he was a man of much prayer, and his soul burned with love to God and the souls of his fellow men.

Mr. Ewing is still in life: therefore, of him we will only say, that the great influence he has exercised, for a series of years, over the Cumberland Presbyterian body—the high esteem which is entertained for him—the deference which is paid to his opinions on all subjects, by the whole church to which he belongs; and the great success which has attended his ministry

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\* See Appendix C.

in many sections, clearly prove, that he would do honor to any body of Christians upon earth.\*

Mr. King is a plain practical man, whose labors have been extensively useful, beloved by all his brethren, many of whom acknowledge him as the instrument in bringing them to Christ; his opportunities in early youth were limited, after being in the ministry for many years, he has given the most satisfactory evidence, that in engaging in that work he had the approbation of God; and he has uniformly enjoyed the confidence and respect of the church.

At the meeting of the Transylvania Presbytery, in October 1801, the case of these brethren was brought before that body, from some of whom they met with warm opposition. However, after a protracted discussion it was agreed by the majority, that they might be permitted to read their discourses to Mr. Rice, privately, who reported favorably. They were not at that time received as candidates for the ministry, but were licensed to catechise and exhort, in the vacant congregations, and directed to prepare other discourses to be read at the next sessions of Presbytery, at which Mr. Anderson was received as a candidate by a majority of one vote, the others by a majority of one vote were not received, but continued as catechists. In the fall of 1802, they were all licensed as probationers for the holy ministry, having adopted the confession of faith of the Presbyterian church, with the exception of the idea of fatality, which they believed was taught in that book under the high and mysterious doctrine of election and reprobation.

The propriety of these measures of Transylvania Presbytery and those of the same nature of Cumberland Presbytery, have often been called in question. But when we take into view, the peculiar circumstances of the inhabitants of the far west, at that time, we do most conscientiously believe, that they were well calculated to promote the interest of the Church of Christ, and the salvation of immortal souls. Indeed this was the only effectual way which could have been adopted to supply the churches with the means of Grace, and prevent the progress of the revival from being finally stopped.

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\* Mr Ewing is a man of liberal education, and extensive reading.



It will be borne in mind, that in this region in those days, it was exceedingly difficult for a young man to obtain a classical education; and had it been practicable, long before these men would have finished their courses, without a miracle, the revival would have been crushed, annihilated, and the young churches scattered to the four winds. But it may be said, Missionaries might have been procured from the east. This we think would have been almost impossible; but even if such men had entered into the field, being strangers to the spirit of this revival, and having never witnessed its glorious effects, they could not have cherished and promoted it. Pray what influence would the dry formal written lecture, of a stripling from college, have exercised at those meetings, where thousands were collected in the open air, to receive the bread of life, and where they had been accustomed to hear a M'Gready, with a voice of thunder, denouncing the curses of the law upon guilty and impenitent sinners; and with words that burned—dwelling upon the Love of God in Christ Jesus, until all around were melted into tears; and all the passions of their souls were aroused, and all their powers were brought into action. The exhibition of such an one on a congregation in such circumstances, would have exerted a most pernicious influence; and had such men taken the possession of the field, the result would have been, the extinction of the revival.

Moreover, Missionaries from the east, who had been raised delicately, who for years had been confined within the walls of a literary institution, were not the men to ride from settlement to settlement through the lone wilderness, exposed to the chilling blast of winter, the parching heat of summer, and the drenching rain, and the terrible tornado; and that too where they would often have to swim their horses over foaming creeks, and swollen rivers, and wade for miles, over deep and dangerous swamps; and after the fatigues of the day, contentedly lay their weary bones upon a pallet on the floor with their saddlebags for a pillow; as many a pioneer of the cross often did in those trying times, and as many such, now do in the new settlements on the frontiers. These were not the men to win upon the affections, and gain the confidence of the hardy first settlers of

the west, for their views, their feelings, and their conversation would necessarily in all things differ; so that there could be no commingling of hearts, and without this no man can successfully preach Christ to perishing sinners, to win such, their confidence, their love, and high regard must first be obtained. He that knows the nearest way to the heart, is most likely to be the successful minister of the Gospel, and to obtain this knowledge, human nature must be studied, not in the schools; but in every day intercourse with men. Many who have spent the prime of their lives in the study of the languages, and sciences, and whose business it is to bring men to Christ, when they enter the field evince that they know nothing of the nature of the being, they design instrumentally to save; and by their attempts to reach him, only drive him farther from them. We concede it is important for the minister of the Gospel to be a learned man, and he is above all price, who possesses learning, with a competent knowledge of human nature, and such a zeal for the cause of Christ as will induce him to undergo any fatigue, or privation, and adapt himself to the manners and customs of those he designs to benefit. But there is a great deficiency in the system of education practiced in the east, where the speculative powers of the mind are improved, and expanded, while more necessary qualifications are neglected. Such have been the previous habits of a great majority of the young missionaries who have come from that quarter to labor in the far west, that they have generally proved themselves to be disqualified to act successfully in new countries. True, many such have located themselves to advantage in cities, and larger towns or densely populated neighborhoods, where they have been enabled to keep the churches together: and some, in such circumstances, have been honored of Heaven in the salvation of many precious souls. But who have carried the Gospel into the frontier settlements? and who at this day supply the great mass of the inhabitants of the valley of the Mississippi with the means of grace, especially in the more westerly and southern parts of it? Not the missionaries who have issued from eastern colleges and theological seminaries; but men reared in the country, who have been all their lives, accustomed to fatigue, exposure, and privation; who have



learned what man is, by daily intercourse with him; and who, from their very frequent extemporaneous preaching, have acquired an ease and fluency of address, which cannot be obtained at the schools. The best test of any system is its practical effect, and if the labors of the ministers of the Gospel, in the west, may be estimated by this rule, it can be demonstrated, that the plan pursued by most of the churches here, to say the least of it, has proved fully as efficient as that of those in the east, who insist so much upon a learned ministry—and, when applied to this country, has been much more successful than their's has been. The assertion is often made by Eastern writers, that the valley of the Mississippi is yet a moral wilderness; but we think, the more densely populated parts of it, for evangelical piety, will bear a comparison with any part of Christendom. The State of Tennessee alone, numbers among its citizens, as many evangelical, devoted, and pious Christians as are to be found in any portion of the United States, with the same amount of population. So upon the whole, of two evils, viz: a learned ministry destitute of capability to endure hardship, and of a proper knowledge of human nature—and a ministry who have not enjoyed the advantages of a collegiate course, but who have been accustomed to privation, and who know the nearest way to the hearts of men—we think the latter the most desirable, especially in a new country. But when a sufficient amount of learning, and the other qualifications can be combined, then will the ministers of the Gospel be, in all respects, what they ought to be: and it is a pleasing feature of the present day, that efforts are now making, to bring the ministers of the Gospel up to this important standard. And in this noble enterprise, in the west, the Cumberland Presbyterians have taken the lead, at their college in Princeton, Kentucky, which is the oldest manual labor school in the valley of the Mississippi. But to return from this digression.

Although it may be argued, that in licensing Messrs. Anderson, Ewing, and King as probationers, the Transylvania Presbytery departed from the discipline of the Presbyterian church; and that the Cumberland Presbytery departed from it still farther in ordaining them as ministers of the

Gospel, (which we are not disposed to concede) yet none can show, that thereby, they departed from the course pursued by our blessed Lord himself, whose Apostles were emphatically styled *unlettered men*. And the extraordinary success that attended the ministrations of these brethren, even before they were admitted into the ministry clearly proves that they had the approbation of the Head of the Church

On their return from Transylvania Presbytery, in the fall of A. D. 1801, these brethren formed three circuits, including all the vacant congregations, which they visited regularly; and without the formality of announcing a text of scripture, as the subject of discourse, proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ to perishing sinners, greatly extended the revival, added to the number of converted, and obtained for themselves the esteem and high regard of the lay members of the church; and were beloved and encouraged, by those aged ministers who had influenced them to enter upon the work, whose labors were lessened, and their hands strengthened, by this new accession to their number. At the spring Presbytery of 1802, a few others were licensed as catechits and exhorters, whose labors were also crowned by the Head of the Church with abundant success. During this season, and indeed until the fall of 1804, this glorious work continued to advance, and hundreds were every season added to the church of such as shall be saved; nor were there any departures from the doctrines of the Presbyterian church, except that already mentioned.

But in other regions where the revival had extended, many ran into the most dangerous heresies, and wild fanaticism, especially in upper Kentucky, into which region the work was introduced in A. D. 1801, by some Presbyterian ministers, who visited the camp meetings in Cumberland country that year, and on their return, adopted, and pursued the same measures. The country being densely populated; immense multitudes attended their camp meetings. On some occasions, as many as ten thousand persons being present at once, a much larger number than could possibly be collected, at any meeting in the region where the work first appeared. Some of the ministers of the Gospel who operated at these meetings appear to have



been in a great degree strangers to the true spirit of the revival, and some of them took the lead in delusion and fanaticism. Some of the people professed, that in their exercises, they had received new views of scripture doctrine, others pretended to foretel future events, and in many instances, the effects that were produced upon the body by mental excitement, were substituted for regenerating grace. Nevertheless, many in that country, and at these meetings, found the pearl of great price, and ever after, walked worthy of their high avocation. But it cannot be denied, that nearly all the ministers who were most actively engaged in promoting the revival in that section, countenanced and encouraged the wild delusions of the multitude, and propagated heresies of the most dangerous nature; which resulted in the formation of the body known by the names of Marshallites, or Stoneites, and sometimes New Lights, or as they called themselves "Christians." The ministers who were at the head of this party, were Marshall, Stone, Dunlavy, McNamer, Huston, and Thompson; and subsequently Bowman, who belonged to the Cumberland Presbytery, and was an active opponent of the revival, and the measures of those who were instrumental in its origin and progress in the Cumberland and Green River countries. Marshall and Thompson afterwards recanted their errors, and returned to the Presbyterian church. Dunlavy, McNamer, and Huston, became Shakers.

Many writers have made the impression, that the delusions and fanatical practices which obtained in upper Kentucky, originated, and were encouraged by those among whom the revival first appeared; and from the manner in which its history has been presented to the public, those who are not better informed on the subject, will readily infer, that Mr. M'Gready was in the van in those fanatical proceedings; whereas nothing can be more untrue, and both he and his fellow laborers, and those who have followed after them in the same field, from first to last, condemned such folly. In no revival of religion in these latter days, have the great radical doctrines of Christianity been more clearly exhibited, and closely enforced, than they were by M'Gready, M'Gee, and Hodge. Mr. M'Gready, particularly, was at great pains to guard his hearers against delusion of every

kind. All preached the entire depravity and unniversal corruption of the human heart, the Atonement made by Christ, and faith in him as the only ground on which sinners can be accepted into favor with God; and they especially dwelt on the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, without which no man can see God in peace. The great day will show that these men, and the great majority of those who through their instrumentality professed to be brought into the fold of Christ, were truly evangelical Christians, and as far removed from the fanaticism and heresy that have been laid to their charge, as any body of Christians upon earth. Indeed it is well known, that when Stone and his fellow-laborers embraced their absurd and heretical notions, and visited the bounds of Cumberland Presbytery, the revival ministers discountenanced and opposed them, and in that opposition they were countenanced and supported by their people; whereas the opposers of the revival and the measures of its supporters flocked by scores to their standard. Therefore it is unjust in the extreme to attribute to the revival, or to the conduct of those among whom it first appeared, those wild fanaticisms, and heresies, which for many years distracted the west. In our humble opinion, the unhappy result of the revival in upper Kentucky, may with much more truth be attributed to the lax discipline of the Presbyterian church, which at that time, evidently, ranked among its ministers and communicants, a fearful number of persons who were strangers to regeneration and consequently were particularly exposed to be led by Satan into delusion and heresy.

The exercises which prevailed during this revival were of an extraordinary character, and deserve some notice. The first we shall notice, is what has been termed *the falling down exercise*. This took place at its commencement and under the ministrations of M'Gready, who in the opening up of his subject was very clear and dispassionate; but in his applications, he pressed the truth home upon the conscience with heart piercing efficacy, and being himself completely absorbed in his subject, he was generally successful in fixing the minds of his hearers on the awful and important truths exhibited, and being a man of much prayer, his ministrations were attended with such a hea-



venly unction and power, that even pious Christians have declared, they could feel the hair of their heads standing on end through fear, and their blood run chill within them, while the converted fell like dead men all around. After closing his discourse he would pass among the congregation exhorting them individually to flee from the wrath to come, when his heart rending appeals would produce the same effects. As the revival extended, this falling down became more general, and as we have already related, sometimes people were thus affected in the public congregation, at home, and when at work in the field, or traveling on the high way. We have conversed with those who were thus exercised, and they all unite in the testimony, that when thus affected, they had the most clear and distressing views of the evil nature of sin, and their exposure to the wrath of God; that these subjects attracted all their attention, and swallowed up their spirits; after which, they had the most delightful views of the ability, suitableness, and willingness of Christ, to save all who come unto God by him; and that although they paid no attention to surrounding objects, never before nor since were their minds more actively engaged.

As these occurrences became very frequent, it is not surprising that Satan should sow his tares, and that some should be led astray by his delusions, and among this class were those, who pretended to have new views of certain doctrines, and who professed to have seen the invisible world, and pretended to tell who of their acquaintances were in heaven, and who were in hell. Instances of this nature however frequent they were in upper Kentucky, were comparatively rare in the Green River and Cumberland countries, and were discountenanced by the ministers and evangelical Christians. Therefore much injustice has been done by laying the folly of a few fanatics, to the charge of the great body of Christians engaged in the revival, many of whom are yet alive, and view all such pretensions with abhorrence. Indeed, if we may judge of the great mass of the converts of the revival by those who yet live, they were a humble, intelligent, and evangelical body of Christians, who were blessed with clear views of the truth as it is in Jesus, and were ready for every good word and work.

The Jerks made their appearance in East Tennessee, shortly after the revival was introduced into that region, where, by the way, the most wild and fanatical practices obtained, such as barking, and jumping, and various other fooleries, which were not only permitted but countenanced, defended, and practiced by some of the ministers of the Gospel of high standing in the Presbyterian church. The first that was known of the jerks among the churches in Cumberland and Green River countries, was in the fall of 1803, at a meeting in Smith county, where several of the congregation were affected by them. Immediately afterwards, they appeared in Wilson county, and soon pervaded all the congregations of every denomination in the country—all classes of society were affected by them, not only the friends of the revival, but its most violent opposers, ministers and people, saints and sinners, men and women, learned and ignorant, strong and feeble, all felt the effects of this strange exercise. Sometimes at the close of a discourse hundreds were to be seen jerking at the sametime. Persons were affected by it when traveling on the high-way, or when at their usual occupations at home.

Those who have never witnessed this affection, will read the following with interest. It was originally related by Mr. McGready; we extract it from the Biblical Repertory.

“A young man, son of an elder, to avoid attending a camp meeting in the neighborhood with the family, feigned himself sick. On the morning of the Sabbath, he continued in bed, until the family had all started for the meeting; he being left alone, except a few small blacks. When thus alone, he congratulated himself on his success, by the deception he had practised on his parents. He raised up his head, and looking all around his room, smiled at the adventure; but lest it might not be complete, lest some one might have occasion to linger, or return, and so he be detected, he resumed his clinical position, covering over his head, and in a short time directed his thoughts towards the camp ground. He fancied the multitude assembling, the services commenced, the bodily exercises, as he had seen them, now in operation. He fancied a certain female now in full exercise; “now she’s at it, now she’s at it.” In a mo-



ment he was taken with the same exercise, the *jerks*, was hurled out of his bed, and *jerked* hither and thither, all around the room, up against the wall, and in every fashion. He had never been affected by bodily exercise before, but now found himself perfectly unmanageable. He had heard it said, and indeed witnessed the fact, that *praying* would cause the *jerks* to cease. He tried it; the desired effect followed immediately. He felt no more the effects of the exercise, than a person does after the hiccough. He supposed it all a dream, a mere conceit, illusion or something of the kind, resumed his bed, commenced his pranks again, and again was the scene acted over, only a little worse. The same remedy was resorted to, and he again became *in statu quo*. He arose, dressed himself, sauntered about awhile, wanted some employment to pass the time away, bethought of a *dog skin* in the vat, that needed *unhairing*, he drew it out, laid it on the beam, rolled up his sleeves, grasped the graining knife, lifted it up to make the first scrape, when lo, it was instantaneously *flirted* out of his grasp, and he was *jerked* back, over logs, against the fence, up and down, until he resorted to his old remedy and again obtained relief. Feeling, as before, perfectly free from any sensible or evil effects, as strong and resolute, and determined, and reckless as ever, he ventured again. He assumed his instrument, and resumed his posture over the subject of this intended operation, when immediately, before he could make one stroke, the whole scene, only, if possible, tenfold worse, was acted over again; it was much more severe, and greatly protracted. The usual remedy, at first, failed; he became alarmed, thought the Lord was now about to kill him, became deeply convicted of his great folly and wickedness; became composed again in body, but now greatly agitated and concerned in mind; called a little black, pointed him to the dog skin, which, he was afraid now to approach, directed where to lay it away, returned to his room weeping and crying to God for mercy, and in this condition was found on the return of the family. He shortly afterward obtained a good hope through grace, applied for the privileges of the church, gave this relation of facts to the session, was received, and in the judgement of Christian charity, gave satisfactory evidence by a scriptural

experience, and godly living, that he was a renewed man, and redeemed sinner saved by grace."

We have conversed with those who have been subject to the jerks, who have informed us, that on having lively views of the goodness of God, and feeling his love shed abroad in their hearts, they have been constrained to shout aloud, but upon resisting, and suppressing their feelings, they generally became affected with the jerks. Others were affected in this way, when very solemn subjects were presented to their mind; and we know ministers of the Gospel, who have been gently affected by them, when earnestly engaged in conversing with those who appeared to be closing with the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, who at the time felt no inconveniency from them, but were the subjects of mental sensations of the most heavenly nature. Others say, that when thus exercised, they experienced great mental agony.

The jerks, and falling down, became of almost every day occurrence in the bounds of the Cumberland Presbytery, and were viewed by the ministers as the result of mental excitement, but forming no part of the work of God, although they accompanied it. Therefore they paid no attention to the exercises, neither forbidding nor encouraging them: with the exception of Mr. Rankin, who on some occasions, appeared to place too much importance upon them, and sometimes, encouraged the delusions of those who imagined or gave out, they had received extraordinary revelations from heaven—he subsequently became a *Shaker*. And it is not to be wondered at, that in such an extensive and powerful revival, some chaff should be found among the wheat; but it cannot be denied by those who most violently opposed this work, that vast numbers were savingly converted to God, and that the moral condition of society was greatly improved by its influence. But the unhappy difficulties which resulted from the licensing and ordaining young men, whose literary acquirements were not such as the discipline of the Presbyterian church required, and who objected to the idea of fatality, which they believed was taught in the Confession of Faith, nearly ruined the whole.



### CHAPTER III.

PROCEEDINGS OF TRANSYLVANIA AND CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIES,—OF KENTUCKY SYNOD.—COMMISSION OF SYNOD.

OUR readers are already informed of the advice given by the Rev. Mr. Rice to the ministers engaged in the revival concerning the propriety of encouraging men to prepare for the ministry, who had not taken a regular collegiate course; and also of the licensing by Transylvania Presbytery of Anderson, Ewing and King as exhorters and catechists, who were subsequently licensed as probationers by that Presbytery. This, together with the same course pursued by the Cumberland Presbytery with other young men, finally led to the dissolution of Cumberland Presbytery, and the formation of a new one by the same name, but having no connection with the Presbyterian church. The difficulties which led to this measure by the revival party have been variously represented; some have censured the one party, and others have not been sparing of the other. That all may judge for themselves, we will lay before our readers, the history of those unhappy difficulties, drawn from the records of the judicatures concerned; and from information received from eye witnesses. This is the more necessary as the charge of irregularity, and want of authority to administer the ordinances of the Gospel, have been repeatedly brought against the Cumberland Presbyterian Ministry; with what justice, the sequel will shew.

At the Sessions of Transylvania Presbytery in October 1802, petitions were presented from several vacant congregations praying for the licensure of Messrs. Anderson, Ewing and King. "After mature deliberation, the Presbytery considered their case as coming under the view of that extraordinary exception, to the book of discipline. Examined them on their experimental acquaintance with religion, the evidences of their call to the ministry, and upon their knowledge of divinity, in which trial they received satisfaction, and licensed them to preach the Go

pel."\* Three ministers, and two elders, entered their dissent against the licensure of these brethren; viz: T. B. Craighead, James Balch, and Samuel Donnel, ministers, who from first to last opposed the Revival, and Daniel M'Goodwin and John Hannah, elders.

At this Presbytery, Ephraim M'Lean and Hugh Kirkpatrick were received as candidates for the ministry, and Lawrence Robison, Robert Bell, and James Farr were licensed as exhorters and catechists. At this Presbytery also James Hawe, a Methodist minister, was received as a member.

At the first Sessions of Kentucky Synod, which were held in October 1802, the Transylvania Presbytery was divided, and Cumberland Presbytery formed, including the Green-River and Cumberland Countries. The new Presbytery met at the Ridge meeting-house on the 5th day of April, 1803, and was composed of the following members: Thomas B. Craighead, T. Templin, John Bowman, Samuel Donnel and James Balch, all unfriendly to the revival—Also, James M'Gready, Wm. Hodge, Wm. M'Gee, John Rankin, and Samuel M'Adow, its sincere friends and warm supporters. At this session four young men were licensed as exhorters and catechists, and Mr. Alexander Anderson was ordered to prepare for ordination, which was performed at Shiloh in May following: Mr. M'Gready presided, and Mr. Hodge gave the charge.

At the next Session of Presbytery, which met at Salem meeting-house, October the 4th, 1803, Ephraim M'Lean and Hugh Kirkpatrick were licensed as probationers for the ministry. "James B. Porter was received as a candidate, and examined on the languages, which was sustained."—three others were licensed as exhorters, one of them, the useful and much lamented David Foster, whose subsequent labors of love were honored by the Head of the church in the salvation of many precious souls. At this session of Presbytery, petitions were presented from Spring creek, M'Adow, and Clarksville congregations, praying for the ordination of Finis Ewing. "In view of these petitions and the wants of the young societies, many of whom needed and

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\*Minutes of Transylvania Presbytery.



much desired the administration of the sealing ordinances, Presbytery agrees, that Mr. Ewing be ordained on the Friday before the third Sabbath in November next."\* Accordingly Mr. Ewing was, by prayer and with the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery, duly set apart to the whole work of the Gospel ministry: on that occasion Mr. M'Gee preached the ordination sermon, and Mr. M'Gready gave the charge. The above order was passed in the presence of some of the members who had entered their dissent against Mr. Ewing's licensure, but on this occasion they made no record of their disapprobation.

At the next regular session of Presbytery, which was held at Shiloh, 3d of April, 1804, the anti-revival party objected to Mr. Ewing's being invited to a seat, on the ground of illegality, which was overruled by a large majority. At this session James B. Porter was licensed as a probationer for the Gospel ministry; James Farr and David Foster were received as candidates, and Thomas Calhoun and John Hodge were licensed as exhorters and catichists—Also an order was passed for the ordination of Samuel King, who was by prayer, with the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery, duly set apart to the whole work of the ministry in June following.

From the minutes of the next session of the Cumberland Presbytery, which met in October 1804, we extract the following: "Wm. M'Clure, Stephen Clinton, Sam'l K. Blythe, Wm. Moore and Samuel Donnel, came forward begging to be taken under the care of the Presbytery, and to be permitted to exercise their gifts in exhortation. Presbytery proceeded to inquire into their experimental acquaintance with religion, and the motives inducing them to warn their fellow creatures to fly from the wrath to come. During the time of the examination the influences of the Eternal Spirit, as a refreshing shower from the everlasting hills, were poured out so copiously, that the members, candidates, and almost all present, were made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." At this Presbytery the lamented Chapman was licensed as an exhorter and catichist, whose labors of love have been honored in the conversion of vast

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\*Cumberland Presbytery Book.

multitudes to God, who will be his crown of rejoicing in the day of Jesus Christ.\* At this Presbytery James Farr and Thomas Nelson were licensed as probationers.

At the Session of Kentucky Synod, in October 1804, a letter of remonstrance against the proceedings of Cumberland Presbytery was presented, signed by Thomas B. Craighead, Samuel Donnel, and John Bowman. After some discussion, the following order was passed, viz: "That the parties both complained of and complaining, be cited to appear at the next stated session of Synod, with all the light and testimony on the subject that can be afforded: and further, that the Rev'd Messrs. David Rice, James Blythe, John Lyle, Archibald Cameron, and Samuel Rennells, or any two of them, be a committee in the mean time, to attend the earliest meeting of the Cumberland Presbytery, to inquire into the case and report at the next meeting of Synod,"† The legality of these first measures of the Synod in relation to the Cumberland Presbytery, are, in our opinion, of unquestionable irregularity. It is true that the Synod had the right to redress whatever had been done wrong by the Presbytery, but before they could cite the members to appear before their bar, the business should have come up before them regularly, viz: by appeal: so at least thought the General Assembly of 1808; for when the members of Cumberland Presbytery sent a letter of remonstrance to that body, they replied that they could not act judicially on their case, as it had not come regularly before them, and directed the remonstrants, to go before the Synod and appeal to the General Assembly, who could then act upon the case. The appointment of a committee to act as spies upon the conduct of an inferior judicatory, was rather novel and unprecedented; and was an assumption of power no Synod possesses.

None of the committee appointed by the Synod attended the next session of Cumberland Presbytery, which was held in April 1805, except Rev'd Archibald Cameron: who upon being invited to take a seat as a corresponding member, (for obvious reasons) refused. From the shewing of the record it appears, "that

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\*See Appendix D.

†Minutes of Kentucky Synod



a general want of preparation was manifested among the brethren to read their discourses." The natural inference to be drawn from this extract is, that the young men felt a timidity to read their discourses in the presence of one who was present as a spy. If this inference be true, they acted upon wrong principle, and the members of Presbytery ought not to have winked at such conduct. If they sincerely believed they were in the discharge of their duty, and pursuing a course calculated to promote the salvation of men, and further the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom, which we sincerely believe was the case, they should not have deviated from their regular course, if all who were opposed to their measures had been present. On this occasion they appear to have been guided more by human policy than an eye single to the glory of God. But it must be remembered that they were placed in a peculiarly trying situation; the best of men are liable to err; perfection is not to be expected in the present state. But this course was calculated to exercise an injurious influence; for he who on that occasion acted as a spy upon the Presbytery, would naturally put a very unfavorable construction on this conduct: and if we may judge of the ability of these young men, by the able and evangelical discourses we have heard from them in after years, many of them had no cause to be ashamed to read their discourses in the presence of any ministers in the country. The only business of importance transacted by the Presbytery, was the passing of an order for the ordination of Mr. Dickey; and another of the same nature, in relation to Thomas Nelson and Samuel Hodge; all of whom were set apart to the whole work of the ministry in June following, but at different places, and by different members of the Presbytery: the former by the anti-Revival party; the two last named by its warm friends and supporters. From this and other occurrences of a similar nature, it is obvious, that two distinct parties existed in the Presbytery, who appear to have had little fellowship for each other, and had no intercourse, except when they were thrown together at their regular sessions.

This may be the proper place to remark, that the opposers of the measures of the revival party, subsequently gave much trou-

ble to the Presbyterian church, except, indeed, Donnel and Templin, who were not endowed by nature or cultivation, with gifts calculated to make them conspicuous in any sphere of life, Mr. Bowman became a Schismatic; Mr. Craighead promulgated pelagianism, for which he was suspended from the Gospel ministry, then deposed and excommunicated, but restored a very short time before his death. We mention these things, simply because the measures adopted by the Kentucky Synod, which finally resulted in the formation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, were taken in consequence of the letter of complaint presented to them by these men; and its but just that the reader may be prepared to put a fair estimate on the character and orthodoxy of all concerned.

The last session of Cumberland Presbytery at which the revival party attended, was held at Red River church, in October 1805, at which David Foster was licensed as a probationer, and Alexander Chapman was received as a candidate for the holy ministry.

From a view of their proceedings from the spring of 1801, until the fall of 1805, Transylvania and Cumberland presbyteries had ordained four men, and licensed seven; some of whom had not acquired the knowledge of the languages required by the book of discipline, none of them had regularly studied theology at the schools, and all on their licensure and ordination, adopted the confession of faith of the Presbyterian church, except the idea of fatality, which they believed was taught in that book under the mysterious and high sounding epithets of election and reprobation.\* They had also received seven or eight as candidates for the ministry, and licensed a number to exercise their gifts as exhorters. Of the last however, it should be remarked, that the members of the Presbytery had no expectation to admit them all into the ministry; but only such as gave good testimony that they possessed respectable

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\*They adopted the Confession of Faith as far as they understood it; meaning that they did not understand what is taught concerning Eternal election and reprobation. The same course, we are informed, was pursued in the Presbytery in North Carolina, to which most of the old members of Cumberland Presbytery had formerly been attached.



talents and promised fair for usefulness; and from that day to the present, it has been usual with the Cumberland body to license men as exhorters, without the smallest expectation of their ever being admitted into the ministry.

At the Session of Kentucky Synod, in October 1805, none of the ministers of the Cumberland Presbytery were present except two, viz: Rev'd Samuel Donnel and William Dickey. We cannot account for their absence, except on the principle, that in their view that body had acted precipitately and illegally in their citation,\* The Cumberland Presbytery book was presented to the Synod by Rev. S. Donnel, and a committee being appointed to examine it, reported:

"Your committee, appointed for the examination of the Cumberland Presbytery Book, have attended to that business, and report as follows, viz: The minutes of the two intermediate Presbyteries, appointed last spring, have not been sent forward—the records of this Presbytery are extremely defective—many important words are omitted—doubtful ones are frequently used—the history is in some places obscure, and the mode of transacting business frequently violates our rules of discipline—is various and discordant.

"In page 2d, James Hawe is styled a regular minister of the Methodist Republican Church, and takes a seat in Presbytery. We have recognized no such regular church, and never heard of Mr. Hawe's recanting those sentiments which he once publicly espoused, though they be inimical to the faith of our church. We found in different places, that persons were examined upon experimental religion, and licensed to exhort in some instances in the bounds of that Presbytery only, and in other instances, that they were allowed to appoint meetings and exhort wherever God in his Providence shall call them; which proceedings, we are of opinion, are disorderly. These are generally called regular exhorters—sometimes, licentiates. The number of these exhorters is about seventeen, some of whom are now ordained to preach—see page 4, 5, 8, 9, 17, 19, 26, 37. Messrs. Crawford and Cooly, who resided in the bounds of Transylvania

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\*See Appendix D.

Presbytery, were, contrary to our book of discipline, taken under the care of the Cumberland Presbytery, licensed to exhort, and afterwards appointed subjects of trial—see pages 8 and 19. In page 10, we find this phrase: *Finis Ewing's circuit.* In the case of Balch's trial, no charge or depositions are recorded. In page 21, is a Presbyterian act, forming a committee to write a circular letter, recommending to the people to contribute for the support of the exhorters, which act we deem illegal. In pages 21 and 22, is a Resolve of Presbytery respecting Shiloh congregation. In page 31, Farr, an illiterate man, is licensed with approbation."

We have carefully examined a copy of the minutes of Cumberland Presbytery Book, and cannot discover the omission of important words, and the use of doubtful ones: neither can we perceive any obscurity in the history of the transactions which involved the revival members in such difficulties as resulted in the dissolution of that Presbytery.

The remarks on the conduct of the Presbytery, relative to James Hawe, are worthy of notice. On a reference to the minutes of Cumberland Presbytery, we find the following, "Mr. James Hawe, formerly a regular minister in the Republican Methodist church, having been received as a member at the last session of the Transylvania Presbytery, came forward and took his seat." From this extract it appears that Mr. Hawe was received into the Presbyterian Church, not by Cumberland, but by Transylvania Presbytery, three years previous to this session of the Synod. We cannot perceive the propriety of the committee's laying at the door of the Cumberland Presbytery, the guilt of an act performed by another; and if Transylvania Presbytery received Mr. Hawe as a member, without his renouncing "*those sentiments he once publicly espoused, though they were inimical to the faith of the Presbyterian church,*" that body alone was accountable for the act. We are aware that the author of the *brief history*, says, "that the Presbytery before its disunion, was almost entirely under the control of the lower members, who afterwards constituted Cumberland Presbytery; but it is well known that five of them were from the first inimical to the proceedings of the revival party, and surely they,



in conjunction with the members from the upper country, had they been so disposed, might have prevented the reception of Mr. Hawe as a member; and if they were too few to prevent this, one alone might have entered his dissent, and in this way brought the affair before the Synod in a legal and orderly manner. But no such step was taken by any member of Transylvania Presbytery, consequently if guilt were attached any where, that whole body was implicated: and a mere tyro in church discipline must at once perceive the absurdity of objecting to the conduct of Cumberland Presbytery in this affair, especially as three sessions of Synod had transpired from the time Mr. Hawe was received into the church, before Synod passed any remark upon the subject. It cannot be argued that the members of Synod had no knowledge that such a person had been received into the church until the Cumberland Presbytery book was presented to that body in 1805, for the author of the *brief history*, says, "This same James Hawe had been well known to many in Kentucky, as a violent opposer of Presbyterians." James Hawe, then, was a noted person, and the fact, that such an one had joined that church he before opposed, would be noised abroad. In such circumstances it is indeed passing strange that no objections should be urged by any church judicature against the manner of his reception, until three years after the event; and it is still more strange, that the notice of this gentleman, already quoted from Cumberland Presbytery book, should be made a charge against that body.

The objection against the term, Finis Ewing's circuit, is to say the least of it, very silly. The truth is, in those days, vast numbers of congregations had no regular supply of the means of grace, and Finis Ewing and the other young men, in their zeal for Christ and his cause, visited all the vacant congregations, which were laid off in districts. One of these brethren informed us that it took him three months to visit all the congregations in his circuit, which extended from the Tennessee river on the south, to the Ohio river on the north, and he visited all the congregations in his bounds four times each, during the year. This arduous, and laudable service, we humbly think is worthy of praise, rather than censure. And of late years,

some of the Presbyterian brethren, appear to have imitated the example of these hardy pioneers, and have thereby greatly benefited many of their congregations, and added to the numbers of the churches. That the term Finis Ewing's circuit should expose the members of Cumberland Presbytery to censure is a sad proof, that a spirit of bigotry prevailed to too great an extent in that body, "*at whose bar the Presbytery then stood.*" One of the most disorderly acts of Cumberland Presbytery was, the writing a circular letter, recommending the vacant congregations to support these holy devoted men of God, who forsook their homes, their helpless families, and friends, and exposed to summer's heat, and winter's cold, traversed hundreds of miles through a dreary wilderness to break to them the bread of life; and who were the honored instruments, in bringing their children, their husbands, their wives, and those they loved, to an interest in the precious privileges of the sons of God. This act of the Presbytery say the committee, "*we deem illegal*"!!! What Christian does not blush at this charge? But the craft was in danger, and we do not write unadvisedly, when we say, that some of the opposers of the measures of Cumberland Presbytery expressed their fears, that owing to the great popularity of these men, their bread would fail them. The charge against the Presbytery, respecting their conduct towards Shiloh congregation, requires explanation. A part of that society, from the commencement of the revival, were its violent opposers. Having formed themselves into a separate society, they withdrew from the others, because they held communion with Arminians: they also called Rev. T. B. Craighead to officiate as their pastor, which call he accepted. Their conduct led to the resolution of the Presbytery, objected against by the committee of Synod, and reads thus:—"Whereas, a body of people, formerly a part of Shiloh congregation, presented a petition to Presbytery, praying themselves to be known in Presbytery by the name of the Shiloh Presbyterian congregation. Presbytery considering that this people having separated from the communion of the church, (as they inform us in the petition,) because their brethren held communion with those holding Arminian principles; and likewise, because Presbytery had sufficient ground to believe they uniform-



ly opposed and condemned the present blessed revival in our country; and lastly, because their Representatives at a former Presbytery, (at Muddy River, Oct. 1801,) declared, they were no longer in communion with our body. Presbytery considering them a people not under their jurisdiction, refused to attend to their petition. Said petitioners, not being satisfied with the judgment of Presbytery, appealed to Synod." We can find nothing incorrect in the conduct of Cumberland Presbytery in this affair. That people appear to have withdrawn from the jurisdiction of Transylvania Presbytery, and thereby virtually left the communion of the Presbyterian church; and could be looked upon in no other light, by the Presbytery, than a separate body, over whom they had no jurisdiction, and consequently they acted correctly, in refusing to grant their petition.

The last objection exhibited against the Presbytery is the licensing of "Mr. Farr, an illiterate man with approbation." It is very true, that Mr. Farr was by no means full of classic lore but what was vastly more important; he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost; and knew well, the sphere that Providence designed him to occupy. For many years he preached successfully in the frontier countries, esteeming his usefulness his chief reward. Under his ministrations, many revivals were experienced, and on more occasions than one he was used by the Head of the Church to cause the desert to blossom as the rose. That man of God whose name is spread in this report as a reproach and by-word, has gone to the enjoyment of a glorious everlasting rest, nor will he be a solitary being there; for there is good ground to believe, that he was instrumental in bringing very many into the fold of Christ. Will it be believed that the very men who urged this act as a charge against Cumberland Presbytery, received into the ministry an illiterate man, Samuel Hodge, who commenced the study of English Grammar a number of years after his reception into the Presbyterian church, as an ordained minister, and as regards usefulness in the ministry was greatly inferior to Mr. Farr.

These charges of the committee against Cumberland Presbytery produced the following by Synod:—"After con-

siderable deliberation, it was resolved, that the Reverend Messrs. John Lyle, John P. Campbell, Archibald Cameron, Josph P. Howe, Saml. Rennells, Robert Stuart, Joshua L. Wilson, Thos. Cleland and Isaac Tull, together with Messrs. Wm. McDowel, Robert Brank, James Allin, James Henderson, Richard Gaines and Andrew Wallace, Elders, or any seven ministers of them, with as many of the above Elders as may be present, be a Commission vested with full Synodical powers, to confer with the members of Cumberland Presbytery, and to adjudicate upon their Presbyterial proceedings which appear upon the minutes of said Presbytery, for the purpose aforesaid, and taken notice of by the committee appointed by Synod to examine said minutes—that the said commission meet on the first Thursday in December next, at Gasper meeting house, Logan county, in the bounds of said Presbytery, for the purpose aforesaid,—that notice be given to the Moderator of said Presbytery, by the stated Clerk of Synod, to attend on the day and at the place aforesaid, so that a full, fair and friendly investigation may take place,—that the said Commission take into consideration and decide upon a letter from the Rev. Thos. B. Craighead and others, and an appeal from the judgment of said Presbytery by certain members of Shiloh congregation,—and that the stated Clerk of Synod furnish the Commission aforesaid with the papers and documents relative to the whole of the aforesaid proceedings.

The stated Clerk of Synod, together with Messrs. Lyle, Donnel and Dickey, were individually directed to use all necessary exertions in citing the members of Cumberland Presbytery to attend the above mentioned meeting of the commission of Synod, and especially, that written citations be sent by the stated Clerk of Synod to the Moderator of said Presbytery, and to the Rev. James McGready.

Resolved, That the Rev. John Lyle, or in his absence, the next named minister in the commission, be Moderator of the commission heretofore appointed, until they constitute, and that he open the commission with a sermon.\*

The commission of Kentucky Synod met on the third day of

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\* Minutes of Kentucky Synod.



December 1805, the members were all present, except Rev. John P. Campbell, and Robert Wilson, with Mr. James Henderson, elder. All the members of Cumberland Presbytery implicated were present, to answer the charges about to be brought against them, viz: Rev. James M'Gready, William Hodge, William M'Gee, John Rankin, and Samuel M'Adow, also Rev. James Hawe, formerly of the Methodist Republican church, and Rev. Finis Ewing, Samuel King, Thomas Nelson, and Samuel Hodge, who had been ordained by the Presbytery. Messrs. Hugh Kirkpatrick, James B. Porter, Robert Bell, David Foster, and Thomas Calhoun, who had been licensed as probationers for the ministry, and Robert Guthrie, Samuel K. Blythe, and Samuel Donnel, who had been received as candidates. The second day of their sessions, the commission took under their consideration, the case of Rev. James Hawe, as stated in the report of the committee of Synod; "and were unanimously of opinion, that Cumberland Presbytery had acted illegally in receiving Mr. Hawe, a regular minister of the Methodist Republican church, without examining him upon divinity, or requiring him to adopt the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian church. The reader will remember that the committee of Synod objected to an article in Cumberland Presbytery book (already quoted) which set forth that this person had been received by Transylvania Presbytery. We have already remarked on the illegality of making Cumberland Presbytery accountable for the act of Transylvania Presbytery; and as the commission appear to have drawn their testimony from that article, we cannot see how they were informed by it, that he had been received without having first renounced the peculiar doctrines of the church, to which he before belonged. We should think that in order to decide correctly on this subject, the commission should have had before them the minutes of the Presbytery, by which he had been received—this however, does not appear to have been the case. Having passed this decision, during their sessions, the commission called upon Mr. Hawe to undergo an examination on divinity before them, which he very judiciously declined: for after having been received, however illegally, as a member of Presbytery, no judicature in the church had a

right to examine him, without a charge of heresy having been regularly brought against him, and even in that case it would have been the prerogative of Presbytery alone to call upon him to submit to an examination. If this, the first act of the commission of Kentucky Synod, be not a violation of the rules of discipline of the Presbyterian church, and an outrage upon justice, we acknowledge we are utterly ignorant of the meaning of the terms.

On the third day of their sessions, the commission proceeded to examine into the conduct of Cumberland Presbytery, in licensing and ordaining men to preach the Gospel who had not acquired the education required by the book of discipline; and who had adopted the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian church with the exception of the idea of fatality, which they believed was taught in that book under the high sounding names of election and reprobation. The testimony on the charges was drawn from the dissent of Craighead, Balch, Bowman, and others in relation to the licensing of Ewing, and King, from a letter of complaint by Craighead, &c. and from Cumberland Presbytery book. The following preamamble and resolution were adopted:—

“Whereas, it appears to the commission of Synod, from the records of the Cumberland Presbytery, from the dissent of the majority of said Presbytery, and from the open confession of those who were at the time of the dissent a majority, that they did license a number of young men to preach the Gospel, and some of them, they ordained to preach the Gospel and administer the ordinances of the church, contrary to the rules and regulations of the Presbyterian church in such cases made and provided; and, whereas, those men have been required by said Presbytery to adopt the said Confession of Faith and Discipline of said church no farther than they believe it to be agreeable to the word of God, by which no man can know what they believe in matters of doctrine; and, whereas, it is alleged by Cumberland Presbytery that those men possess extraordinary talents, by which they have been induced to license them without attending to the book of Discipline:

“Therefore, on motion, resolved, that the commission of



Synod do proceed to examine those persons irregularly licensed, and those irregularly ordained by the Cumberland Presbytery, and judge of their qualifications for the Gospel ministry."

The question naturally arises, by what authority did the commission adopt this high handed measure? That we may decide it fairly, it will be necessary to enquire into the powers of Presbyteries, and Synods. The discipline of the Presbyterian church says, the Presbytery has power to examine and license men for the holy ministry; to ordain, install, and *judge ministers.*" The same book says, "that Synod has power to receive and issue all appeals regularly brought up from the Presbyteries; to decide on all references made to them; to review the records of Presbyteries, and approve or condemn them; to redress whatever has been done by Presbyteries contrary to order; to take effectual care that Presbyteries observe the constitution of the church; to erect new Presbyteries, and unite or divide those which were before erected." From these extracts it appears that it is the prerogative of Presbytery to examine, license, and ordain her own candidates, and in all the powers invested in the Synod, we can find no authority to take the candidates out of the hands of the Presbytery for the purpose of examining them, much less has Synod a right to examine ordained ministers. Therefore this procedure was without proper authority, and a violation of the constitution of the Presbyterian church.

The members of Presbytery refused to submit to this unconstitutional resolution of the commission, and rightly argued, that "they had the exclusive right to examine and license their own candidates, and that the Synod had no right to take them out of their hands." This refusal produced much altercation, and to use the language of the minutes, "the Cumberland Presbytery were earnestly exhorted to submit to the authority with which the commission was invested."

On the 4th day of their sessions the commission passed the following resolution:

"On motion, *Resolved*, That the majority of the Cumberland Presbytery be adjured through the medium of our Moderator, to submit to the authority which God has established in his

church, and with which this commission of Synod is clothed: and that by the same authority those men who were licensed, and those who were ordained, in a disorderly manner, be abjured to come forward and submit to an examination by the commission of Synod.

“The said majority of the Cumberland Presbytery requested leave to retire for consultation, which was granted.” Upon which the members of the Presbytery retired for prayer and consultation.

On their return the commission proceeded to adjure them to submit to their authority, which they refused to do. The commission then called on the young men to submit, on which Rev. Finis Ewing as their organ remarked, “it is said if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God.” We therefore request that we be permitted to retire to ask counsel of the Most High, before we give our answer. Some of the members of this body which professed to be a court of Jesus Christ, and to transact business in the name of Him, who would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, strenuously opposed a compliance with this very reasonable request, upon which one of the members expostulated on the unreasonableness of their opposition, and finally succeeded in obtaining permission for them to retire. We are informed that they went into the secret grove, and there implored their covenant God and Father in Christ Jesus, to direct them in that course which should be for his glory, and the good of the church, and returned without consulting with each other, or entering into any resolutions by which they should all be governed. Whereupon the Moderator of the commission proceeded to adjure them to submit to a re-examination. The question was put to them individually, “Do you submit or not submit?” Robert Bell, and Samuel Blythe requested a short time to consider on the subject; all the others refused to submit, and assigned as reasons for their refusal—“That they believed the Cumberland Presbytery was a regular church judiciary, and competent to judge of the faith, and abilities of its candidates. That they themselves had not been charged with heresy or immorality, and if they had, the Presbytery would have been the proper judica-



ture to have called them to account. Messrs. Bell and Blythe being called upon, and the same question being put to them, they also refused to submit, and for the same reasons. The commission then passed the following:

“Whereas, the Commission of Synod have in a friendly manner, conferred with the Cumberland Presbytery, and have examined into the proceedings of said Presbytery, in licensing men to exhort and to preach the Gospel, and in ordaining some to administer ordinances, and have found that they were irregularly licensed, &c. were called upon to come forward to be examined by the commission, Messrs. William Hodge, James M’Gready, William M’Gee, John Rankin and Samuel M’Adow, interposed to prevent the examination; and also, that the Moderator called upon the following persons, viz: Robert Guthrie, Samuel Hodge James Porter, David Foster, Finis Ewing, Hugh Kirkpatrick, Thomas Nelson, Thomas Calhoun, Samuel Donnel, Samuel King, Samuel Blythe, and Robert Bell, to come forward and stand an examination as to their qualifications for the Gospel ministry, they refused to comply, thereby virtually renouncing the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian church; and it being proclaimed by common fame, that the majority of these men are not only illiterate, but erroneous in sentiment—

“*Resolved*, That as the above named persons never had regular authority from the Presbytery of Cumberland to preach the Gospel, &c. the Commission of Synod prohibit, and they do hereby solemnly prohibit the said persons from exhorting, preaching, and administering the ordinances, in consequence of any authority which they have obtained from the Cumberland Presbytery, until they submit to our jurisdiction and undergo the requisite examination.” \*

This resolution adopted by a body of learned divines is exceed-

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\* Robert Guthrie, Samuel Donnel, and Samuel K. Blythe, were not licensed preachers. S. K. Blythe never was licensed, the other two were licensed some years after the constitution of the 2d Cumberland Presbytery. Therefore if it were conceded that the commission had a right to examine the licensed and ordained ministers, their calling upon these three men to submit to examination, was illegal and absurd—equally so was their prohibiting them to preach the Gospel. They made no pretensions to have authority from any church judicature to preach. This is of a piece with the other “decisive measures” of that body

ingly strange, and very absurd, five of these young man were licensed by Presbytery in the following language. "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by that authority which he hath given to the church for its edification, we do license you to preach the Gospel, wherever God in his providence may call you, and for this purpose may the blessing of God rest upon you, and the Spirit of Christ fill your hearts—*Amen.*" Four of them had been ordained by prayer, and with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. So that, they were as truly ordained and licensed preachers of the Gospel as any others in the Presbyterian church. The folly of this act of the commission is indeed still more evident, from the fact that Transylvania Presbytery subsequently recognized the license and ordination of two of them, and that according to Dr. Cleland "under the connivance and approbation of the Synod."

The Commission further resolved: "Although we conceive the Commission have synodical powers to adjudicate upon the conduct of James M'Gready, William Hodge, William M'Gee, John Rankin and Samuel M'Adow; in not submitting to the examination of those men who had been irregularly licensed and ordained, when solemnly adjured by the Moderator agreeably to the resolution of the Commission, yet we decline pronouncing sentence, and remand said persons to the Synod of Kentucky; and they are hereby cited to appear at our next annual session, to be held in the Presbyterian Church in Lexington on the third Tuesday of October next, to account for said conduct; and whereas, common fame loudly proclaims that the Rev. Messrs. Wm. Hodge, Wm. M'Gee, and John Rankin hold and propagate doctrines contrary to those contained in the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church.

*"Resolved,* That they be, and they are hereby cited to appear before the Synod of Kentucky at her next session, there to answer the above charge."

Hodge, M'Gee and Rankin, by a written address, refused to obey the citation, alledging that the Commission had acted unconstitutionally. That body after reconsidering their citation passed the following:



"Whereas, a majority of Cumberland Presbytery are involved in charges which appeared before the Commission of Synod; and whereas, it appears to the Commission that there is not a sufficient number of members who are disinterested to adjudicate upon matters of common fame:

*"Resolved,* Therefore, as common fame loudly proclaims that the Rev. Wm. Hodge, Wm. M'Gee and John Rankin hold doctrines contrary to those contained in our Confession of Faith, viz: that they, in effect, deny Election, and hold that there is a certain sufficiency of grace given to every man, which, if he will improve, he shall obtain more, &c. until he arrive at true conversion. This grace has sometimes been expressed by the following phrase, or phrases of similar import with the following, viz: A power to accept the offer of salvation—a spark of light given to every man in his natural state—talent, &c. &c.

*"Resolved,* That the above named men be cited, and they are hereby cited, to appear at our next Annual Session of Synod, to be held in the Presbyterian Church in Lexington, on the 3d Tuesday in October next, to answer the above charges."

Here is a fair expose of the erroneous tenets laid to the charge of these ministers of the Gospel, and if the holding of them constitute heresy, not only they, but all the persons licensed and ordained by the Cumberland Presbytery, were heretical in doctrine, with the exception of Nelson and Hodge, who returned to the Presbyterian Church: the same views are still held by the Cumberland Presbyterian ministry; and if we are not greatly mistaken, a majority of the members of the Presbyterian Church sincerely hold the same doctrine, although they may express them in different language. Moreover it was the adherence of the young men to these views, that produced the final separation of the two parties; for all the young men afterwards proposed to the Transylvania Presbytery, that they, as a body, would submit to a re-examination, with the understanding that they should be indulged in their conscientious scruples on this subject.

The concluding resolution of the Commission is worthy of special remark; it reads thus, *"Resolved,* That Thomas B. Craighead, Samuel Donnel and John Bowman have acted irregular-

ty, in taking up the case by *fama clamosa*, and not by dissent. If these men brought business of any nature from the Presbytery before Synod in an irregular manner, that body could not act upon it constitutionally until it came up before them in due form. It is true that Craighead, Donnel, Balch and others did dissent from the proceedings of the majority of Transylvania Presbytery, in the licensure of Ewing and King, but as the Synod did not act upon that dissent for the space of three years, it was null and void. And that body appointed the Commission in consequence of what was styled a common fame letter, written to them by Craighead and others. From the shewing of the Commission, these men should have come before the Synod by dissent, and as they did not, the business came before them irregularly, they took it up irregularly; and the whole of their proceedings from first to last were irregular and unconstitutional—and in the most high handed manner, did they cut off from the Presbyterian Church a number of Evangelical and Spiritual ministers of the Gospel, whose labors of love had been honored by the Head of the Church, in the salvation of many precious souls, and who had been instrumental in turning a moral wilderness into the Garden of the Lord. By these proceedings of the Commission of Kentucky Synod, hundreds of persons were grievously afflicted; the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ sustained great injury; and a breach was made in the Presbyterian Church, which we believe will be difficult to heal; whereas, if a mild and consolatory course had been pursued, every difficulty might have been overcome, and at the same time, the purity of the Church maintained. The young men, both licensed and ordained by Cumberland Presbytery, had they been indulged in their conscientious scruples, in relation to what they deemed fatality or necessity, would cheerfully have submitted themselves to the guidance of the proper church judicature; and had it been required, most of them would have availed themselves of any facilities, which might have been afforded them, to obtain the classic and scientific attainments required by the discipline of the Presbyterian Church. But the Kentucky Synod viewed their objections to the Confession of Faith as an effectual bar to union:—And not satisfied with illegally expelling them from the



communion of the Presbyterian Church, pronounced them a heretical offset. Posterity, however, will put a very different estimate upon their character. Already God has set his seal to their ministrations, by making them the honored instruments in bringing tens of thousands to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

From the time of the meeting of the Commission of the Kentucky Synod for twenty years the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky, and Cumberland Country in Tennessee had no revival; but the revival spirit was not extinct, for in spite of all opposition the work progressed through the instrumentality of other denominations. The Methodist brethren especially cherished and promoted it; and from the time that the Commission of Kentucky Synod cut off the revival members of Cumberland Presbytery from the Presbyterian Church, they and their descendants have passed through one revival, only to be blessed with another: and no body of people of the same numerical strength, in the same length of time in these latter days, have enjoyed more clear manifestations of the approbations of Heaven.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE COUNCIL—ITS PROCEEDINGS—HODGE AND RANKIN SUSPENDED BY KENTUCKY SYNOD—LETTER TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY—PROCEEDINGS OF TRANSYLVANIA PRESBYTERY—FINAL DECISION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY—FURTHER EFFORTS BY THE COUNSEL TO EFFECT A RECONCILIATION—THEIR OFFERS REJECTED—THE MEMBERS ENTER INTO A BOND OF UNION.

THE Commission of Kentucky Synod had no sooner dissolved than the revival members of Cumberland Presbytery consulted together with regard to the course they ought then to pursue. After mature deliberation, they agreed to continue to preach the Gospel, and administer the ordinances as before; and without regarding the illegal prohibition of the Commission of Synod, they encouraged the young men to continue the exercise of their respective functions. They also resolved to form themselves into a Council, consisting of the ministers, elders and representatives from vacancies which formerly composed the majority of Cumberland Presbytery, but at which no presbyterial business was to be transacted; and to this resolution they firmly adhered. These resolutions received the hearty approbation of all the congregations in the Presbytery, except a very few who had been unfriendly to the revival from first to last.

As the Head of the Church was pleased to vouch safe his gracious presence, and blessing, the revival was not impeded, but continued to prosper: the churches were strengthened, and many were added to them, of such as shall be saved. Thus did these despised and persecuted servants of Jesus see the work of the Lord prospering in their hands; and although they knew not what would be the issue of the difficulties in which they were involved, yet they enjoyed the testimony of a good conscience, and were assured that their labor would not be in vain.

But shortly after the formation of the Council, its members and the churches under their care suffered a heavy loss by the withdrawal from their ranks of the Rev. James McGready, who



was viewed by them as their chief counselor, and whom many of them claimed as the honored instrument in bringing them into the fold of Christ. Mr. McGready was a Calvinist of the old school. From his written discourses, it is obvious that he believed Christ died for his church, which would be saved. Most of the members of Council held that Christ died for every man, and that a portion of the Spirit is given unto all men to profit withal; and he feared, that in process of time, the members of the Council would dissent still farther from what he viewed strict orthodoxy. Moreover, he ardently loved the Presbyterian Church, and had no expectation at the commencement, and on to the time of the Commission, that the measures of the majority of Cumberland Presbytery would result in the separation of the revival party from the Presbyterian Church, but after the meeting of that body he believed that such must be the final issue, and fearing the consequences, he determined to keep himself aloof. We find his name no more on the documents of the Council, yet he did not return to the Transylvania Presbytery until A. D. 1809. In the minutes of the fall Session of Transylvania Presbytery, A. D. 1808, there is a letter recorded, addressed to Messrs. McGready, M'Adow and Hodge, relative to the difficulties which then existed. In the minutes of the spring session of 1809, there is an order for the citation of Mr. McGready. His name appears in the minutes of Kentucky Synod of that year. Immediately after he left the Council Mr. McGready removed from Logan to Henderson county, Kentucky, where he resided for a number of years, taking occasional missionary tours through Indiana and the State of Ohio. Until his death he continued to preach with great zeal; but although he was still useful, he had to lament the want of that heavenly unction and glorious success which attended his ministrations in former days.\* The congregations in which Mr. McGready labored so successfully on his first arrival in Kentucky, and in which the revival first appeared, continued under the care of the Council, with the exception of a few of the Gasper River members; they are at this day flourishing Cumberland Presbyterian societies.—

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\*Appendix E.

Gaspar River congregation is now known by the name of the Pilot Knob society, and Muddy River is called Liberty society.

Although Messrs. Hodge and Rankin refused to obey the citation of the commission; yet, by the advice of the Council they appeared before the Kentucky Synod at their session in A. D. 1806, for the purpose of endeavoring to effect a reconciliation. A Committee was appointed to converse with them on the subject of the difficulties which existed between the two bodies. They entered into a free conversation on the erroneous doctrines they and Mr. M'Gee were said to entertain; during the course of which they denied that man was born with a *seed* of grace, the holding of which had been laid to their charge, but contended that he was born with a principle of enmity against God. They moreover asserted, that so far from denying the doctrine of election, they firmly believed it, but viewed it as a doctrine they could not comprehend. The Committee were convinced the charge of heresy was false; but proceeded to call upon them to deliver the ordained ministers, licentiates, and candidates into the hands of the Synod to be examined. This they refused to do, which resulted as follows:

“The Committee appointed to converse with Messrs Hodge and Rankin reported as follows, viz:

“That they have conversed with these gentleman at some length, and find them adhering to the former determination not to submit to the authority of Synod exercised by their Commission in silencing certain young men licensed and ordained by the Cumberland Presbytery.

“Synod having maturely deliberated upon the case of Messrs. Hodge and Rankin, and having taken without effect every cautionary measure to reclaim them to a due sense of the authority of Synod, and submission to the order and discipline of the Church, proceeded to suspend them; and they do hereby solemnly suspend the said Wm. Hodge and John Rankin from the exercise of all the functions of the Gospel Ministry, and from the Sacraments of the Church, until they manifest repentance and submission.”

That evangelical minister and sound disciplinarian, Dr Ely, who is stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian



Church, in his brief history of the Cumberland Presbyterians, in relation to the procedure of the Kentucky Synod, says, "There can be no doubt now in the mind of any sound Presbyterian but that the *suspension* of the ministers above named was wholly unconstitutional, and ought to be held to be void."

At the next meeting of the Council, which was held early in the spring of A. D. 1807, Messrs. Hodge and Rankin having reported their failure to effect a reconciliation with the Kentucky Synod, the following letter of remonstrance was ordered to be transmitted to the General Assembly.

*Rev. Fathers and Brethren*—We have neither the pleasure nor advantage of being known by face to any of you. Common fame may have borne our names unto you, and some part of our conduct under unfavorable coloring. If not, you will shortly hear of us through the medium of the Kentucky Synod. We are known to a distance by the title (though falsely so called) of the Majority of Cumberland Presbytery. We are a few brethren who labor under grievances occasioned by the Synod of Kentucky, neither can we indulge one hope of having them removed by that reverend body.

"As our local situation renders the personal attendance of any of us at the General Assembly almost impracticable, we take this as our only alternative, to present unto you, as guardians under Christ of that branch of the Church to which we belong, our humble petition for a redress of our grievances.

"That you may have a just view of our situation and distress, we humbly conceive it necessary to give you a brief history of facts, relative to our present case, as they transpired in this country. We therefore beseech you to hear us patiently. We had the happiness, the most of us, of having removed to this country before, and in that ever memorable year 1800, when the gracious work of God broke out in such power amongst us. There were but four Presbyterian ministers who were truly friendly to the revival in the bounds of West Tennessee and West Kentucky—two in each. While we preached the same doctrines we had years before—the doctrines of the Bible and our Confession of Faith,—the Spirit of the Lord accompanied the word with unusual power to the hearts of the people. The

effects of this divine energy were quickly manifested by most awful outcries for mercy—by falling down, speechless and motionless, in many cases for hours. When speech and a degree of thought were recovered, the most open and full confession of sin, and importunate intreaties for pardon were made. Such cries, accompanied with struggles for faith as the gift of God, we never heard nor saw before. Many who had been subjects of conversion years before, but in a less visible manner, were astonished and confounded, while they beheld such unusual exercises, and knew not what all would issue in, but were often afraid, in distraction and confusion. Some times while our tears and cries were mingling with those of the mourners, for mercy upon them, with pleasing amazement we could perceive the day-spring from on high was visiting them. The opening views they then expressed of the gospel scheme of salvation—the fullness, suitableness and freeness of Christ—his ability to save—the beauty of holiness the preciousness of God's word—the truth of his promises—the equity of his law—the hatefulness of sin, on which they could with eloquence expatiate, on the full return of bodily strength and activity—their sympathising concern for the unconverted—their persuasive arguments to come to Christ—their love to God, his people and cause—the transports of joy and holy delight with which they were filled, expressed in shouts of praise to him who had washed them in his blood,—would have convinced (yea actually did many) a Deist, that none but a Divine Agent could produce such happy effects. When we add, the holy, upright, self-denying lives which numbers manifest to this day, every shadow of doubt disappears. The work broke out nearly in the centre of our country. The unusual exercises and appearances were soon noised abroad. Our sacramental occasions were attended by vast multitudes, and remarkable tokens of God's presence and power. Numbers came out to see. Here were Deists, drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, and all the different characters that compose the great class of the wicked. Many of them fell under deep convictions, and to all appearance became the happy subjects of conversion. Some of them who came from afar, when they returned home, immediately began to exhort their families and neighbors to seek salva-



tion. They appointed meetings for prayer. The Lord remarkably blessed those meetings in the conviction and conversion of many. Thus, in a few months, the blessed work spread like a rapid flame from the centre to the circumference of our country. The attention of all our inhabitants appeared to be aroused.

Now, truly the harvest was great and the laborers few. Unable to resist the pressing solicitations from every quarter for preaching, with unutterable pleasure we went out, laboring day and night, until our bodies were worn down, and after all we could not supply one third of the places calling upon us for preaching. While thus engaged, and the gracious work still going on, we observed what was very remarkable, that in almost every neighborhood there was some one who appeared to have uncommon gifts for exhortation, and prayer, and were zealously engaged in the exercises thereof, while the Lord wrought by them to the conversion of many. Viewing the infant state of the church in our country, the anxious desire for religious instruction, the gifts, diligence and success of those we have mentioned, and the scriptural authority for exhortation, we were induced with almost every member in the Presbytery, to open a door for the licensure of exhorters. Well knowing it was a liberty that was, and would be taken; and concluding if taken by Presbyterial authority it might prevent disorder and weakness. It was now agreed that any of those who might be licensed and manifested extraordinary talents and piety, should be considered as candidates for the ministry: also that for their improvement they should have subjects appointed, on which they were to be heard at our stated sessions of Presbytery; that if by their improvement, piety and usefulness, they purchased to themselves a good degree, they might be set apart to the holy ministry. Accordingly, several made application, who were examined on experimental religion, and the motives inducing them to public exhortation. Those we judged qualified were then licensed. The first were all men of families, and somewhat advanced in years. Out they went, leaving wives and children, houses and lands, for Christ's sake and the Gospel; suffering hunger, cold and weariness, for weeks in succession; but the Lord was with

them and made them happy instruments in helping on his work in the conversion of many. After a long trial of those men in different parts of our country, there came forward to our Presbytery several petitions for their licensure to the ministry, signed by hundreds of the most moral and religious characters where they had labored.

From our personal knowledge of those men's good talents, piety and usefulness; from the numerous warm petitions of the people at large—from the example of many Presbyteries—from the silence of Scripture on literary accomplishments—from your own declaration in answer to Mr. Rice's letter, viz: "That human learning is not essential to the ministry"—from the exception made in the Book of Discipline, in extraordinary cases,—we humbly conceived, that it would not be a transgression either of the laws of God or the rules of our church, to license men of such a description. We therefore did license them, and a few others at different times afterward: some of them with, and some without literary acquisitions; but all men of gifts, piety and influence, having spent years previous in exhortation, before they were admitted to the ministry. Several were licensed to exhort, whose names are on our minutes whom we never had a design of admitting to the ministry. Now, the work of the Lord went on. Numbers of young, promising congregations were formed and regularly organized. The Lord added to them such we hope, as shall be saved. So that, in the course of a few years the wilds of our country echoed with the praises of the Lord. Savage ignorance was changed into a knowledge of God and his dear son; and savage ferocity into the lamb-like spirit of Jesus. Truly the wilderness and solitary place appeared to be glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. The parched ground became a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water.

Thus, while the glorious work prevailed, love and harmony abounded amongst ministers, exhorters and people. A few of our opposing brethren in the Presbytery, carried up to the Synod of Kentucky, a common false letter, formed by themselves. In this letter, they grossly misrepresented our characters, conduct, and the doctrines we taught. Although they were eye and ear witnesses of all we did in a Presbyterial capacity, yet



they stated them as circulating reports, and declared at the same time, that they did not offer them as complaints, nor feel themselves bound to support those charges. This was in the year 1803. In 1804, a Commission composed of a part, and authorized by the Synod of Kentucky invested with full power to adjudicate upon, and finally decide on our case, were sent down among us. Ministers and exhorters were all ordered to appear at their bar. We appeared accordingly, and produced the minutes of our Presbytery, and expected them to serve as written testimony of facts.—But the Commission paid very little regard to them. They took the common-fame letter, formed their docket from it, and arranged their charges against us in the same order they stood in the letter. We plead to be taken on our minutes, which were written testimony of all we had done. And, if they took us upon that letter, that they would call forward the authors thereof, who had subscribed their names to it, and agreeably to discipline, on charges exhibited against a gospel minister, require them to support those charges, or stand liable to censure for slanderous reports. But the Commission, regardless of all our entreaties, commanded us to order. This was the ground on which we were taken: consequently called upon to answer for holding and preaching false doctrines, giving unjust judgment, licensing not only unlearned, but men of immoral characters, to exhort and preach. At the same time our accusers were free from any fears of being censured for false and slanderous charges. Although nothing in any nor all the charges brought against us, either were or could be proven in the smallest degree, except that of licensing unlearned men to preach, which every member in Synod knew years before, yet were we treated with the utmost severity. Threatened with synodical power, and told to remember we stood at their Bar: when, with meekness and sincerity we offered any thing for our defence, such reflections and misconstructions were cast upon it, as would have been truly grating to a well informed, polite ear, from gentlemen of the bar—much more so, when coming from the ministers of the meek, forbearing Redeemer to their unprovoking and uncondemned brethren. The Commission formed a resolution that we should give up all our licentiates fully to their power to be

dealt with as they saw proper. To this we neither did nor could accede, because, as a presbytery, we had a right to examine and license our own licentiates. Upon this the Commission in a very awful and public manner forbade all our licentiates, preachers and exhorters, any more to speak in the name of Jesus as public teachers, and cited us to the next annual session of Synod in October 1806: the whole of us for not submitting to the authority of the Commission, and three of us for false doctrines. Conscious of it being our right, as a Presbytery, to examine our own candidates, and well knowing the unspotted characters of those we had licensed—their good natural endowments, piety and usefulness, the destitute and dangerous state of the societies under our care, we encouraged our licentiates to comply with the entreaties of the people, (many of whom were present by their representatives at the session of the Commission) to go and labor amongst them as formerly. You will be told that they were not regularly licensed, having only received the Confession of Faith partially, but the fears which caused that exception, rose merely from the concise manner in which the highly mysterious doctrine of divine decrees is there expressed, which was thought led to fatality. So far are they and we from rejecting either the doctrines or discipline therein contained, that every preacher and exhorter in our connexion have adopted and received the Confession, firmly persuaded that it contains the best system of scripture doctrines and discipline, of any known by us upon earth—but not so sacred nor infallible as the scriptures. Having never once meditated nor desired to become a new party, nor to produce secession in the church, we have not constituted as a Presbytery, since the Commission silenced our licentiates, neither do we mean to constitute, until our circumstances render it necessary; or until every hope fails of having our rights as a Presbytery restored, and grievances redressed by the interposition and authority of your reverend body.

In order to prevent divisions and falling a prey to numerous sectaries, we found it necessary that ministers, and the people by their representatives, should meet occasionally in form of a Council, to help on the now laboring cause of God amongst us, until in his gracious providence our situation may be changed. At



those meetings, all our licentiates have cheerfully submitted to a re-examination upon divinity as taught in our shorter catechism; also upon English grammar and other useful studies.

Domestic circumstances permitted only two of us complying with the citation by the Commission of Synod in October 1806. When our business came on, the first charge was for false doctrines, viz: denying the doctrine of election, and holding that every man is born with a seed of grace, which if improved will lead to glory. Well knowing that this was a common fame charge, and that no person on earth could support it against us; and also, that according to discipline, we ought first to have been called before the Presbytery to which we belonged, (but never were) yet we cheerfully submitted to be examined by Synod. A Committee was appointed for that purpose. We had a free conversation upon doctrine; and from every appearance, the Committee in a very short time was fully satisfied that the charge was false. We told them, and now declare, that so far are we from denying the doctrine of election, that we firmly believe it a doctrine of the Bible, and so highly mysterious that we are unable fully to comprehend it. We utterly deny that man is born with a seed of grace, but firmly believe that he is born with a principle of enmity against God, which, if not removed by regeneration, will lead to destruction. Synod required our reasons for not submitting to the authority of their Commission. We gave them as above stated. They then called upon us to deliver up our licentiates to them to be treated as they might judge proper. We answered, we could not see it consistent with discipline to make a demand on our presbyterial rights, unless we by mal-conduct, had forfeited them. They then told us we must and should give them up, or suffer suspension. We answered, that according to the express letter of discipline on the powers of the Presbytery, we had a right to examine, license and ordain our candidates, and therefore could not on principles of discipline, give them up; also, that on the principles of their demand, every thing that we might hereafter do in a presbyterial capacity, (though strictly up to discipline) was a mere nullity unless it met with their approbation. Upon this we were suspended from the performance of every part of our ministerial

office and the communion of the church, until we manifest repentance. When we returned home and informed our people, they universally expressed their disapprobation and earnestly besought us to continue our labors as formerly amongst them. Knowing that through grace we had been kept from immoral conduct, making divisions, or propagating false doctrines, we yielded to their entreaties, humbly believing that, in so doing, we would not violate our ordination vows; for the scriptures as well as discipline, teach that nothing but immorality, heresy and schism merit suspension—none of which did the Synod appear even to suspect us for, or charge us with, as the cause of our suspension; but solely for not submitting to their authority. Thus, Synod, by their Commission, silenced all our licentiates. They, themselves, suspended us, and thereby left every congregation in our bounds at once destitute of all public means of grace, and exposed to the ravages of various sectaries,

Thus have we given you as concise and just a statement of our conduct, circumstances and distresses as we can. Reverend Fathers and Brothers, we now earnestly entreat your immediate interposition on our case; for it will not with safety admit delay. We humbly hope from the view you now have of our distresses, you will sympathise with us. By your authority we pray that the prohibition may be taken off our licentiates and the suspension from us; that you restore our presbyterial rights, never forfeited, but wrested from us; and appoint us a Presbytery, as there are bounds and members sufficient for two. We never have embraced the idea of an unlearned ministry. The peculiar state of our country and extent of the revival, reduced us to the necessity of introducing more of that description than we otherwise would. We sincerely esteem a learned and pious ministry, and hope the church will never be left destitute of such an ornament. Be assured that we feel ourselves equally bound and as strongly disposed to maintain the peace and purity of the church, the dignity and influence of her ministers, as the Synod of Kentucky. We have our struggles to prevent the separation of many respectable members from our church, through their resentment to the Synod towards us. Our most quieting persuasive with them is, never let us make divisions, nor sepa-



rate from the church to which we belong, but lay our distresses before the General Assembly, and wait the issue. So that if our grievances are not redressed, our rights restored and established by your speedy interposition and authority, every respectable Presbyterian congregation in Cumberland and the Barrens of Kentucky, will be struck off from your connection. We humbly trust that you will not view this as a challenge, but a piece of honest information to prevent an evil we sincerely deprecate. If you grant our petition, you will thereby cement all the above, to the church over which, under Christ, you preside. Entitled, we firmly believe, to the blessing of peace-makers and healers of such a dangerous breach, you will give joy and gladness to thousands, excite praise and thanksgiving to the Lord amongst all our societies—have their blessing upon, and their prayers for you in all your deliberations, and from none more sincerely than your distressed subscribing brothers.”

To this the Assembly replied in substance, “In as much as you have not regularly appealed to this Assembly, they do not consider themselves called on judicially to decide on your case.”

About the same time Mr. Hodge received the following letter, which sheds considerable light on the proceedings of that body in this affair.

*“Rev. and Dear Sir:—*Although personally unknown to you in the flesh, I have a humble hope we may have drank in the same blessed spirit. Mr. Trigg, of your country, can inform you of my character and standing in this place. I hold a humble membership in the First Presbyterian Church in this city, formerly under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Ewing, deceased, now under the care of the Rev. James P. Wilson.

*“The unhappy difference in your quarter of our church, so immediately succeeding what the great proportion of the Presbyterian interest in this place believed to be a great revival of the work of God, has excited deep concern, and our General Assembly have had the matter fully before them. It appeared to be the decided opinion of the majority in the General Assembly, that no Synod has a right to proceed against ministers or individuals, except the matter shall have come before them by ap-*

peal from a Presbytery—that only a Presbytery can call its members to account for errors in doctrine or practice—that a man once ordained by a Presbytery, is an ordained minister, though the Presbytery may have acted improperly in not requiring due qualification, and that even a Presbytery could not afterwards depose, but for cause arising or made public after ordination—that the licentiates are always in the power of their Presbytery to examine them and withdraw their licensure at discretion,—but that a Synod may act against a Presbytery as such, by dissolving, dividing, censuring, &c.; consequently, that the dealings with Cumberland Presbytery were proper, in dissolving them and annexing them to Transylvania, but wholly improper in suspending ordained ministers, and still more improper was it for a Commission of Synod to do it. But, though the rule about knowledge of language, in our discipline, is not often fully complied with, and though the rule is not found in the Scriptures, yet it is so important, that, though your case was an imperious one, yet they seemed to fear you had gone too far, especially in the censures. But what the General Assembly have finally done, will appear very inconclusive on these points, because they wished to avoid offending the Synod and Presbytery, and the minority in the Assembly took advantage of this to make the business end as much as possible in such a manner as not to be construed against the power of Synods and General Assembly. The General Assembly have, however questioned the regularity of the proceedings of your Synod, and the Rev. Mr. Kemper, and Mr. McCalla, Elder from your Synod, voted with the majority in this censure—the Rev. Mr. Cameron opposed with warmth. The Rev. Dr. Miller, of New York, Rev. Dr. John Woodhull, of New Brunswick; Rev. James P. Wilson, of Philadelphia; and the Rev. Conrad Speece, of Hanover, Presbyteries, advocated the principles of the majority strenuously. Rev. Dr. Green and Mr. Janeway (alternates, their principals both being obliged to relinquish their seats by indisposition and otherwise, and who were of the majority,) with Mr. Cathcart, and Mr. Linn, of Carlisle Presbytery; and Mr. Cameron, of Transylvania Presbytery, strenuously defended the Synod.



You will see my name amongst the Trustees of the General Assembly, which will apologize for the liberty I have taken in dropping you this; a desire that you should have correct information, also prompted to it. Any information you can give me at any time of the success of the Redeemer's cause amongst you, will be thankfully received by mail."

The letter from the Assembly to the Kentucky Synod, alluded to in the above, says, "Your proceedings in demanding that the young men irregularly licensed and ordained, be given up to your body for examination; in suspending the irregularly ordained ministers without process in their case; and in suspending Messrs. Hodge and Rankin for not submitting to the re-examination of the young men are, at least, of questionable regularity. They, therefore, advise that you seriously review the proceedings, and consider whether some of them ought not to be rescinded, and steps speedily taken to mitigate the sufferings, which your censure appears to have produced, and to remove, at least, a part of the complaint it has excited."

At the sessions of Kentucky Synod, in October 1807, that body reviewed and confirmed their proceedings; and as at their previous annual sessions, they had dissolved Cumberland Presbytery, they now directed Transylvania Presbytery to settle the affair with the members of the council. This unconstitutional measure of Kentucky Synod, was calculated to cut off the complaining brethren from all hope of redress; who before they could be heard in the highest judicature of the church by regular appeal, had to appear in the first place, before a lower judicature than that which first pronounced sentence against them: and did they appeal from their decision they must again stand before the bar of a body, by whom they had already been condemned. Moreover as the constitution of the church admits of no such procedure, it has provided no remedy for those who are thus illegally treated. It is indeed passing strange that a body of men who undertook to deal with others for violating the constitution of the Presbyterian church, should be guilty of the most flagrant departures from both its letter and spirit.

In the spring of A. D. 1808, the members of the council sent

a petition to the General Assembly, praying for the interference of that body in their behalf, to which the Assembly replied, "that as the matter had not been brought up to them by appeal from the Synod of Kentucky, they could give no relief; but must refer the petitioners to the Synod itself as the only constitutional body competent to reverse what they had done wrong." "And in case," say the Assembly, "they either refuse to review or rectify them, [their own proceedings] you know it is your privilege to appeal to the General Assembly who will then be empowered to act upon it."

Immediately after the adjournment of the Assembly, Rev. James P. Wilson, minister of the first Presbyterian church, in Philadelphia, wrote the following letter to Mr. Hodge.

*Reverend and dear brother in the Lord*—It was chiefly with a view to your case, that I was in the Assembly this year; many of us are anxious that you and your brethren should be relieved from your embarrassing situation. The great majority of the General Assembly were entirely disposed to do every thing in your favor that would be just and proper, or that you could reasonably have wished. If the records of the Synod of Kentucky had been before us, we should without difficulty have reversed your suspension: but we had no communication from that Synod, and could not concern with them absent. Yet this cannot essentially affect you; for if the work of their Commission was without constitutional authority and wholly void, and this is the better opinion; and also if the ordinations made by you, before the dissolution of your Presbytery, were by lawful authority, you are as truly in the ministerial office (though not a Presbytery) as you can be. I am very glad to discover that you have not acted as a Presbytery; I beseech you to refrain from this, and continue as you are a little longer, and we have every reason to believe that your troubles will be ended at the next General Assembly.

But it is necessary that you should apply to the Synod of Kentucky by petition or otherwise, and desire a revision or reconsideration of their proceedings with respect to you; if they take off the suspension, you are then restored to the greater body of the visible church, received as members of the Synod, and to representation in the General Assembly; if they refuse,



you can enter your appeal and forward a petition of that kind to the next General Assembly, and thus your case will be brought up in such a way as that *that* body can, and no doubt will, give you redress. I am aware that this is a disagreeable condescension on your part, but the cause of Christ's church requires it, and he will give you grace to be and do any thing for his glory; nor is it necessary to suggest to you that calmness, much meekness and good temper will be important in the application, nor can that be an acknowledgment of the validity of the former proceedings.

We are glad to hear of the prudence, diligence, and success of the brethren you admitted. If they hold the form of sound words, and are steadfast in the faith, they will be as much beloved by the most of us, as though they had studied long and graduated. Yet our standards on the point of qualifications in future had better be adhered to; as the church will be more stable, and, if demands for ministers increase, you can set up a grammar school, and the candidates will easily acquire a sufficient knowledge of the languages whilst they are studying Divinity; and thus will they not only comply with rules, but be better qualified to cope with the more subtle enemies of the Gospel.

Doctor M'Knight, Doctor Hall, and myself, were a committee in your case. We wrote a letter for you, which you will see in the extracts, and one, much more plain than the last year's, to the Synod. This letter was read and disputed by paragraphs, and a great majority approved every sentence: but after all, we thought we would not send it, as it could do no good, and might exasperate some of them."

A serious charge brought against the Cumberland Presbytery by the Kentucky Synod was, that their Presbytery book, had not been forwarded to be reviewed by them, and at their session in 1803, they went so far as to issue an order, that it should be presented at their next annual meeting, which was accordingly done; but from the above, it appears that they themselves were guilty of the same disorderly conduct; and thereby prevented the Assembly from doing an act of justice, to those who were suffering by the illegal measures of the Synod. Indeed the prospect of an adjustment of their difficulties was now so dark;

that many of the members of the Council urged the necessity of entering into a constituted state, and in that capacity to address the General Assembly; but some of the aged members were reluctant to take this step, while there was the smallest prospect of effecting a reconciliation with the Synod: they therefore unanimously resolved to take further measures, if possible, to effect this purpose, before they should constitute into a Presbytery.

In October, A. D. 1808, Transylvania Presbytery wrote the following letter to the members of the Council:—"We are anxious to see you, and have a friendly interview with you respecting the difficulties which exist in your case. The Synod of Kentucky have directed us to settle the business which lay before them respecting you. We hope you will meet with us at Glasgow, in Barren county, on Wednesday the 22d day of March next, and bring with you as many of those men who were declared by the Commission of Synod to be destitute of authority to preach the Gospel, as may to you seem proper, that they may be sharers of the friendly interview." In compliance with this request, Rev. Mr. Wm. Hodge repaired to the meeting of the Transylvania Presbytery, at the time specified; and a Committee being appointed to converse with him, he was informed by them that the Presbytery was invested with *full Synodical powers to act and decide upon his own case and that of his brethren*.\* Mr. Hodge assured this Committee that all the young men, both licensed and ordained, subscribed to the Confession of Faith in full, except the supposed idea of fatality which seemed to them to be taught, under the mysterious doctrine of predestination, or divine decrees. The Committee then proposed a written question to him, viz: "Do you receive the Confession of Faith, doctrines, and government unequivocally." To this he replied that he had received both at his licensure and ordination "and now do most cordially." The Presbytery informed Mr. Hodge they could do nothing for him at present,

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\*This is extracted from a copy of a letter addressed by Mr. Hodge to the Assembly of 1809. Who ever before heard a Presbytery being invested with Synodical powers? With the same propriety a session may be invested with Presbyterial powers.



but that before they rose, they would make up their judgment, and send it to him by letter. Accordingly the following was transmitted to Mr. Hodge.

“ *Dear Sir,*—Agreeably to your request, Presbytery have thought proper to address you by letter, and through you, all those likewise who are interested with you. We again renew our declaration of an earnest solicitude and unfeigned anxiety, that the unhappy breach which has taken place between us may be healed, and the present existing differences removed; and as you have requested a direct and formal statement from us of the terms on which that desirable and important object may be effected, we, with the same friendly spirit that was manifested in our late conference, and we hope with that honesty and integrity of heart which ought to actuate the servants of our divine Lord and Master, do proceed to state these terms and requisitions, which, to descend to the lowest stage of accommodation, we think are necessary. And in the first place, as to yourself, we think the ground of your suspension by Synod just, and consequently, the reasons for that procedure right and proper. With this impression, we conceive your restoration can only be effected by a proper acknowledgment of the faith, and submission to the authority of our church, as contained in our book of discipline, to which you are referred. The same will be required of those brethren who are yet under citation for not submitting to the authority of Synod, as exercised by their Commission. Any thing less than this, would subject us to the censure of that body, a part of which we compose, and of whose adjudications in the case of the Cumberland Presbytery we approve. In the next place, with relation to those young men licensed and ordained by the aforesaid Presbytery, we do humbly conceive that a formal examination of them respecting doctrine and discipline is indispensable, under present circumstances, for us to be satisfied, as a Presbytery, respecting their sentiments; and consequently, whether we are agreed in point of doctrine, without which a union would be inconsistent, and afford no security for future peace and harmony in the church. From hence it may be easily inferred, that an unequivocal adoption of our Confession of Faith is also indispensable. This would be only placing them on the same grounds on which we

ourselves stand, and any other could not be advisable or desirable to either those young men or ourselves. For them to adopt the Confession of Faith only in *part*, and we the *whole*, would by no means, in our opinion, effect a union according to truth and reality; and we conceive a nominal union would not prove a sufficient security against future difficulties; and whatever inference may be drawn by others, respecting what is called fatality, from our views, as expressed in the Confession of Faith, respecting the divine sovereignty, in the decrees of predestination and election, we conceive that no such conclusion can follow from the premises as there laid down.”

To the terms contained in this letter, the members of the Council could not submit, and as it was utterly impossible for them, circumstanced as they were, to appeal from the Synod to the General Assembly, Mr. Hodge addressed another letter to that body, at their sessions in 1809.\* Kentucky Synod also addressed a letter to the General Assembly in relation to their proceedings with the Cumberland Presbytery, which produced the following:—“The Assembly took into consideration a letter from the Synod of Kentucky, and having also read another letter from their records, which by accident was detained from the last Assembly, were of opinion, that the Synod have in their letters exercised their unquestionable right of explaining their proceedings, which they have done, in a respectful and able manner, and to the full satisfaction of this Assembly: and the Assembly think it due to that Synod to say, that they deserve the thanks of the church for the firmness and zeal with which they have acted, in the trying circumstances in which they have been placed.”

Thus did the General Assembly approve and confirm the proceedings of Kentucky Synod in relation to its conduct towards the revival members of Cumberland Presbytery. But was there no inconsistency in this decision? The reader will remember that the revival members of Cumberland Presbytery addressed a letter to the General Assembly in A. D. 1806, “explaining their proceedings” which they did “in a respectful and able

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\* A copy of this letter is in our possession in the hand writing of Mr. Hodge, but the close of it is so mutilated that we cannot lay it before our readers.



manner." But the Assembly replied to them, "Inasmuch as you have not regularly appealed to this Assembly, they do not consider themselves as called on judicially to decide on your case." It will, also, be remembered, that the revival members of Cumberland Presbytery, wrote another letter of the same nature to the Assembly of A. D. 1808, to which the Assembly replied, "That, as the matter had not been brought up to them by *appeal* from the Synod of Kentucky, they could give no relief." But a letter from Kentucky Synod, with the perusal of another, dated a year before, could draw from the Assembly a hearty approval of all their proceedings. If the Assembly, at the two previous annual sessions could not act judicially upon the case, because it came before them by letter from the members of Cumberland Presbytery. We cannot see on what principle they could act upon it when it came before them by a letter from Kentucky Synod. Mr. Lyle, one of the most violent members of the Commission, was present at this Assembly, and represented to the members, that there was no prospect the members of Cumberland Presbytery ever would come regularly before them. And well did that gentleman know that, Kentucky Synod, by placing the affair in the hands of Transylvania Presbytery, together with *full Synodical powers* to act and decide upon it, had taken effectual means to prevent the members of Cumberland Presbytery from coming before the General Assembly by regular appeal from Kentucky Synod. But this does not alter the merit of the case, and it is evident that if the Assembly could not act upon the case by a letter from Cumberland Presbytery, neither could they judicially act upon it by one or fifty letters from the Kentucky Synod.

It will be remembered that the Commission prohibited all the young men, four of whom were ordained, from preaching and administering ordinances, in consequence of any authority they had received from Cumberland Presbytery. The General Assembly of 1807, pronounced this procedure, at "least of questionable regularity." The General Assembly of 1809, however, approved of and confirmed this act of the Commission. In the minutes of the General Assembly of 1816, we find the following, in a report of a Committee who had examined the minutes of the Synod of Geneva, which was adopted. "Your Committee

doubted the correctness of the order given by the Synod to the Presbytery of Geneva, to reconsider their proceedings on the subject of the the admission of the Rev. Shepley Wells, a constituent member of that presbytery." "The Synod of Geneva were, beyond doubt, competent to censure the Presbytery of Geneva for admitting hastily, and on slight evidence, into their body an unworthy, or even suspicious character. But it is, in the opinion of your Committee equally clear, that the right of deciding on the fitness of admitting Mr. Wells, a constituent member of Presbytery of Geneva, belonged to the Presbytery itself, and having admitted him, no matter how improvidently, that their decision was valid and final. The individual admitted became a member in full standing; nor could the Presbytery, though it should reconsider, reverse its own decision, or in any way sever the member so admitted from their body, except by a regular process."—Minutes of the General Assembly, Vol. III. page 235. According to this decision of the General Assembly of 1816, the Cumberland Presbytery could not have silenced Messrs. Ewing, King, Nelson and Hodge, except by a regular process, much less could the Commission of Kentucky Synod do it, so that had the case even come regularly before the Assembly of 1809, the procedure of that body was "at least of questionable regularity;" and we think that posterity will pronounce it illegal, and unconstitutional. Indeed the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church\* has already published in his valuable periodical that the Cumberland Presbyterians in these unhappy difficulties "*received great ecclesiastical wrong.*"

The members of the Council received the intelligence that the Assembly had decided in favor of the Synod, with astonishment; and at their next meeting which was in August (1809) a majority were in favor of constituting into a Presbytery. But as some wished to make a last effort with the Synod, it was unanimously agreed that two Commissioners should be appointed to propose the following terms to the Synod, or Transylvania Presbytery.

"We, the preachers belonging to the Council, both old and

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\* Dr. Ely, Editor of the Philadelphian.



young, from a sincere desire to be in union with the general Presbyterian church, are willing to be examined on the tenets of our holy religion, by the Transylvania Presbytery, Synod, or a Committee appointed for that purpose; taking along the idea, however, that we be received or rejected as a connected body. Also all our ministers ordained and licentiate, retain their former authority derived from the Cumberland Presbytery." They also expressed their willingness, if required, to adopt the Confession of Faith with the exception of the idea of fatality only. The Commissioners appointed to propose these terms were the Rev. Wm. Hodge, and Thomas Donnel. Mr. Hodge repaired to Lexington, where he laid the foregoing terms before the Kentucky Synod, at their sessions in October, 1809, which were rejected. He then presented the following:

*"Reverend Fathers and Brothers:—*Having been a member of the late Cumberland Presbytery, whose candidates were forbidden, by your Commission, to act as ministers or public teachers, because they were supposed not to be sound in the faith, of the partial manner in which they adopted the Confession and government of our church.

Being deeply impressed with the divided state of the church in our country—having an earnest desire to promote the peace and good order thereof, and also to support her authority under Christ—I do in an individual capacity, most earnestly request, and humbly pray your reverend body to appoint a committee as soon as possible for the purpose of examining these young men on the soundness of their faith and unequivocal reception of the confession and government of our church, to which examination I am well assured they will cheerfully submit. That those whom you may find orthodox in their sentiments and aptness to teach, you would dispense with literary qualifications in their case as individuals, but this I submit to your wisdom. I make this request because I humbly conceive if obtained, it will produce peace and harmony in our societies—bring fully under your care and inspection a large and respectable body of professing Christians.

Should you condescend to hear your humble petitioner and appoint a committee for the above purpose, my next request is, that said committee be authorized to deal with myself as an

individual; to remove my suspension, and restore me to my former standing. Dear brethren I humbly submit these things to your consideration, sincerely hoping you will not take amiss any thing that I have suggested.

That the Great Head of the Church may direct you in all your deliberations, restore peace and purity in principle and practice, in all his churches, is and shall be the prayer of your humble petitioner."

This produced an order for a meeting of Transylvania Presbytery in December, at Green Town, to confer with Mr. Hodge and others.

The Council met at Shiloh on the 4th of day October, A. D. 1809. As Mr. Hodge did not appear for sometime, a messenger was dispatched to his residence, with a request that he would meet with the Council, with which he complied. The enquiry was then put, what progress have the Commissioners made at the Transylvania Presbytery, or Kentucky Synod, towards bringing about a reconciliation, &c.? After some preliminary remarks, Mr. Hodge read the petition above, which he had presented to the Kentucky Synod, and the order of that body upon it, and argued that he had obtained the substance of the terms of the Council. These terms were then read, and compared with the petition, and order of the Synod. The vote was then taken, has the Synod complied with the propositions of the Council—which was decided in the negative, by a large majority. The vote was then taken whether or not the resolution of the last Council should be put into execution, which went solemnly to declare "that unless the Synod acceded to their propositions they would on this day constitute into a Presbytery," which was carried in the affirmative by a large majority:—after which Mr. William Hodge, his nephew Mr. Samuel Hodge, and Thomas Donnel, elder, withdrew from the Council.

The only ordained ministers now present were Messrs. Wm. McGee, Finis Ewing, and Samuel King. Mr. McGee informed the Council, he at that time felt embarrassed in his mind concerning the propriety of constituting into a Presbytery: in consequence of this, the Council adjourned, for a short period, to give him an opportunity of coming to a decision, during which



he was earnestly engaged at a Throne of Grace for direction. When the Council again met, he informed the members that he did not feel free to constitute then. The hesitation of Mr. McGee did not originate in any fears that by constituting into a Presbytery, the members would exercise a right which did not belong to them; but simply from the fact, that although he believed that the idea of fatality was taught in the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian church, and that the truth lay betwixt Arminianism and Calvinism; yet he had not been able to frame a system, which in his views comprised the whole truth, as it is in Christ Jesus; and he declared, that he could not act in the constitution of a Presbytery, until he could be perfectly satisfied on this subject. While in this state of mind he refrained altogether from the exercise of the ministry. Mr. M'Adow had for some time, taken no part in the Councils of the brethren, owing to ill health. Therefore the members of the Council were in a very perplexing condition, and to all human appearance, their future usefulness, as a body of ministers, appeared on the very eve of being blasted, and the churches, under their care, of being annihilated. In this state the members of the Council, together with all the licentiates and candidates present, formed into a committee; and entered into a free conversation on the subject before them: when it was fully agreed to, that each ordained minister, licentiate, elder, and representative should continue in union, and use their influence to keep the societies in union, until the third Friday in March next, and then meet at the Ridge meeting house. After which each should be released from the bond, unless previous to that time, three ordained ministers of the body had constituted a Presbytery.

In the meanwhile Mr. William Hodge, his nephew Samuel Hodge, and Thomas Nelson, repaired to Transylvania Presbytery, which was called to meet in December by the Kentucky Synod. Mr. William Hodge was restored to his former standing in the Presbyterian church, and Thomas Nelson and Samuel Hodge having submitted to an examination on divinity, their licensure and ordination by Cumberland Presbytery were recognized and confirmed. As the literary attainments of Mr. Hodge were inferior to those of most of the young men licensed or ordained by Cumberland Presbytery, we are warranted in the

conclusion, that the only very serious difficulty existing between the two bodies, consisted in the rejection by the members of the Council, of what they deemed fatality; and as the others argued that fatality was not taught in the Confession of Faith,\* we think these brethren might have been indulged in their conscientious scruples on that subject.

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\* The General Assembly say, in relation to Cumberland Presbytery:—

“The objections they make to our Confession of Faith as if it taught the doctrines of fatality, we fear is not so much the result of a defect of understanding, as of disposition to misrepresent. For who could dream that the doctrine of fatality was taught in an instrument, in which it is declared expressly, that the liberty of second causes is not impaired.”—*Assembly's Digest*, page 141.



## CHAPTER V.

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERY CONSTITUTED.—LAST EFFORT OF ITS MEMBERS FOR REUNION WITH THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—CUMBERLAND SYNOD.—DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH—CUMBERLAND COLLEGE—GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONSTITUTED.—APPLICATION FROM PENNSYLVANIA FOR MISSIONARIES.—SUCCESS OF THE MISSIONARIES IN THAT REGION.—REPORT ON THE STATE OF RELIGION BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1831.—STATISTICS OF THE CHURCH.—CONCLUSION.

In February 1810. Rev. Finis Ewing and Samuel King, with Mr. Ephraim McLean, an intelligent and acceptable licensed preacher visited Mr. M'Adow, and informed him the object of their coming was to request his agency in constituting a new and independent Presbytery. He replied that this measure was too important to be adopted hastily, therefore he must have some time for prayer, and reflection, before he would give them an answer. The whole night was spent by him in prayer to Almighty God for direction; in the morning, he was still undecided, during the day he repeatedly retired to secret devotion, at length he came in with a most cheerful and heavenly countenance and informed them he was ready to constitute the Presbytery, that God had heard and answered the doubtful question. Accordingly, the first Cumberland Presbytery was constituted on the 4th day of February 1810.

“In Dixon County, State of Tennessee, at the Rev. Samuel M'Adow's this 4th day of February, 1810.

“We Samuel M'Adow, Finis Ewing, and Samuel King, regularly ordained ministers, in the Presbyterian church, against whom no charge, either of immorality or heresy has ever been exhibited, before any of the church Judicatures, having waited in vain more than four years, in the mean time petitioning the General Assembly for a redress of grievances, and a restoration of our violated rights, have, and do hereby agree and determine, to constitute into a Presbytery, known by the name of the Cumberland Presbytery, on the following conditions.

All candidates for the ministry, who may hereafter be licensed by this Presbytery, and all the licentiates or probationers, who may hereafter be ordained by this Presbytery, shall be required, before such licensure and ordination, to receive and adopt the Confession and Discipline of the Presbyterian church, except the idea of fatality, that seems to be taught under the mysterious doctrine of predestination. It is to be understood, however, that such as can clearly receive the Confession, without an exception, shall not be required to make any. Moreover, all licentiates before they are set apart to the whole work of the ministry, or ordained, shall be required to undergo an examination on English Grammar, Geography, Astronomy, Natural and Moral Philosophy, and Church History. It will not be understood that examinations on experimental religion and theology will be omitted. The Presbytery may also require an examination on all, or on any part, of the above branches of literature before licensure if they deem it expedient."

The charge has often been made, that Cumberland Presbyterians have no regular ordination among them, and that they have no right to administer ordinances, &c. This charge however is exceedingly absurd, and has long since been viewed as false by all reflecting Presbyterians, who are acquainted with the true history of the difficulties between Cumberland Presbytery and Kentucky Synod. It is true, that the Commission of Synod had prohibited Messrs Ewing and King from Preaching and administering ordinances, which prohibition was disorderly and illegal, as we have already shown. Mr. M'Adow had been cited to appear before the Synod, for refusing to submit to the examination of the young men by the Commission.— And it is also true that Mulenburgh Presbytery pretended to depose him from the Gospel Ministry, but this was done, in consequence of his aiding in constituting a new, and independent Presbytery, by which act he declined the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church; therefore, that Presbytery had no better right to depose Mr. M'Adow from the office of the Gospel Ministry, than the Pope has to depose all the protestant ministers in Christendom.

The new Presbytery proceeded to examine, and ordain Mr. Ephraim McLean. "During the whole preceding transactions"



says Mr. Ewing, "I felt an indiscrivable awe, solemnity, and even timidity. My judgment was clear, that it was duty to constitute the Presbytery, but I feared that I had no immediate, special and overpowering evidence direct from God, that we were about to do right. But being appointed to preside in the ordination. It became my duty to pray, I distinctly recollect that with one hand on the head of the preacher, and the other lifted to Heaven, the first sentence I uttered, the immediate presence and power of God were most sensibly felt by me, and I believe by all engaged in the transaction, and such were my feelings, that every doubt concerning the propriety of what we had done was entirely banished."\*

The Presbytery adjourned to meet at the Ridge meeting house on the third Sunday in March.

Thus did the difficulties between the Revival ministers of Cumberland Presbytery, and Kentucky Synod, result in the formation of a new presbytery, independent of the Presbyterian Church. But, not until every mean within the power of the former had been used by them to effect a reconciliation, which it appears could be brought about, only by their unequivocal adoption of the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, and which as honest men they could not do.

That the first Cumberland Presbytery gave no cause of complaint cannot be asserted, for if the Presbyterian Discipline be taken as the rule, by which they as members of that church were bound to be governed, they went too far in the ordination of Samuel Hodge, and the Licensure of James Farr, and perhaps one or two more who were licensed by them. But if the sacred scriptures, and the example of our blessed Lord himself be taken as the highest authority; it will be exceedingly difficult to prove, that they departed from the proper mode of introducing men into the Gospel ministry. The course pursued by the opposite party was unjust, and cruel, and their denunciations of the young men, as disorderly, heretical, and disorganizing savored not of the spirit of Christ, neither did they act candidly, in not distinguishing between those, who were merely licensed as exhorters and catchists, from those, who were received as candidates; as they could not but know that

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\*Extracted from a letter of Mr. Ewing to the author.

the members of Presbytery had no expectation of admitting them all into the ministry; but only such, as after some trial gave satisfactory evidence of their aptness to teach; and as an evidence, that such was not the design of the members of Cumberland Presbytery, not one half of those licensed to exhort, were received by them as candidates for the Gospel ministry; when we take into view the very clear manifestations of the Divine approbation, which attended the labors of the young men, these difficulties must stand as a lasting monument, that sectarian arrangements, and policy, are often at war with the best interests of the general course of the Redeemer of guilty men.

When this seperation took place it was foretold that Cumberland Presbytery would be like Jonah's gourd, that its members would wander farther, and farther from the confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church until they would embrace, and promulgate the most dangerous heresies; and that their influence would never be felt, beyond the bounds of Green River and Cumberland countries: such no doubt would have been the issue, had they struggled in their own strength, and this would have afforded a clear evidence; that the Head of the church disapproved of their course. But if such results did not follow; and their labors were instrumental in bringing thousands into the fold of Christ: it must be conceded that they had the approbation of Heaven.

Agreeably to appointment the Cumberland Presbytery, met at the Ridge meeting house on the third Tuesday in March 1810, at which time and place, the members of the Council, together with the licensed preachers, and candidates, who had agreed to continue in Union until that time, were also present, and three ordained ministers having constituted a Presbytery, the bond of union was considered perpetual. Thus, when to all human appearance the revival party of Cumberland Presbytery were about to be scattered, and their congregations to be taken possession of by other denominations of christians, did they in their last extremity, see the Lord open a door of usefulness before them, and lead them into a large place, where there was much ground to occupy: The following remarks from one of the young men who had been encouraged by the members of the council to exercise his gifts in public exhortation, will no doubt exhibit the views, and feelings of all the others, who were similarly circumstanced in



these trying times. "I was travelling in Alabama Territory, when I heard of the constitution of the first Cumberland Presbytery by Messrs M'Adow, Ewing and King. If I ever was free from sectarian feelings, it was at that period, I often thought for what am I laboring, I am connected with no constituted Church, and know not, that I ever shall be. For what then do I labor, if I cannot build up a Church? The reply was, only for the glory of God, and the salvation of precious souls. But what will become of the few so strongly united in the bonds of love? This could only be solved by the Head of the church and of Him I often sought for an answer; and I am persuaded he did answer as sometime before the Presbytery was constituted, I became quite calm on the subject, under the firm persuasion that the Lord would open a way for us. I was in this frame when the intelligence reached me, which caused me to feel truly thankful to God who had thus opened a door for a feeble handful of his followers to become more extensively useful.\* When Cumberland Presbytery was constituted at Ridge meeting house, in March 1810, which may properly be considered the first regular Session, for at it, the churches were first represented. It included four ordained ministers, viz: Samuel M'Adow,† Finis Ewing, Samuel King, and Ephraim M'Lean. Six licensed preachers, viz: Jas. B. Potter, Hugh Kirkpatrick, Robt. Bell, David Foster, Thomas Calhoun and James Farr, and seven candidates for the ministry viz: Alexander Chapman, William Harris, Robert Donnel, William Barnett, William Bumpass, Robert McCorkle and David McLin. All these candidates with the exception of Mr. Chapman, who had been received at the first Cumberland Presbytery, had been authorised by the Council to exhort and catechise, but as in that capacity, the brethren performed no Presbyterianial acts, they were not received as candidates for the ministry, until this session. These ministers, licentiates, and candidates may be viewed as the Fathers of the Cumberland Presbyterian church, and to their number may be added Mr. M'Gee; who although for reasons already stated, he did not aid in the constitution of the church, yet he was the fast friend of its members, and on becoming satisfied with regard to the system of doctrine, embraced by the body, he became

\*Robert Donnel. †See Appendix, C.

a member of the Presbytery at the fall session in 1810, and for a number of years afterwards labored successfully, and was eminently useful not only in extending the borders of the young branch to which he belonged, but also was the honored instrument, in bringing many precious souls from darkness to light; from the power of Satan, to an interest in the privileges of the sons of God. The constitution of the Presbytery was hailed with joy by all the churches formerly under the care of the Council, of this they were informed by a circular letter written by order of Presbytery.\*

At the fourth session of Cumberland Presbytery which was held in Oct. 1811, a Committee was appointed to meet a delegation from Mulenburgh, and West Tennessee Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church, "to confer on the subject of a reunion, and other matters relative to that harmony that should exist between the members and people of Jesus Christ." Instead of a union being effected between the two bodies, by order of West Tennessee Presbytery, a pastoral letter was addressed to all the churches under its care, warning them of the *herisies*, of those who had assumed the names Cumberland Presbytery, asserting that its members had no authority to administer ordinances &c. This letter was ably answered by Rev. Finis Ewing. The whole affair resulted, in the exclusion of the members of Cumberland Presbytery and the members of their churches from a participation in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, when administered by Presbyterian ministers. This harsh and unchristian measure produced the following on the parts of Cumberland Presbytery "Whereas our brethren of Mulenburgh, and West Tennessee Presbyteries, instead of manifesting a spirit of reconciliation have officially shut the door against the two bodies communing together. Resolved 1st, That this presbytery has, in substance, complied with our declaration in the circular letter relating to a reunion. 2. It is our opinion that the Mulenburgh, and West Tennessee Presbyteries by their late acts have for the present cut off all prospects of a reunion, between the two churches. 3. That we have always been, and expect to continue to be willing and ready, to have union on proper principles with the

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\*See Appendix, II.



general Presbyterian Church. This last resolution is a fair sample of the spirit which has prevailed among the great body of the Cumberland Presbyterian ministers and people, and which we trust will continue to be cherished by them, not only towards the Presbyterian church, but towards all evangelical denominations.

When the Comission of Synod prohibited the young men from preaching the Gospel, their operations were in a great measure confined to the Green River and Cumberland countries, but notwithstanding all the difficulties, in which the council was involved, performing no presbyterial acts for the space of four years in consequence of which, all who placed themselves under the care of that body with an eye to the ministry during that period, had to labor under many serious disadvantages, being only authorized, or rather encouraged, to exercise their gifts as exhorters, and many of the churches being in a great measure deprived of the sealing ordinances, yet their members gradually increased, and their bounds were every year enlarged. And such was the rapid increase of the church, that three years after the constitution of the Presbytery, it was deemed necessary to divide it into three, viz: Cumberland, Logan and Elk Presbyteries.

The members of these Presbyteries met at the Beech church, Sumner county Tennessee, on the 5th day of October, 1813; and constituted Cumberland Synod.\* At these sessions of Synod, the brief view of the doctrines and discipline &c. of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Woodward's edition of Buck's Theological Dictionary, was unanimously approved of, and directed to be published in that work, and reads as follows:

“*Doctrines.*—It has been already observed, that the Presbyterian confession is their confession, “except the idea of fatality.” But as some may think this too indefinite, it may be proper here to state explicitly all the essential doctrines or tenets they hold.

1st. That Adam was made upright, pure and *free*; that he was necessarily under the moral law, which binds all intelligences; and having transgressed it, he was consequently, with all his posterity, exposed to eternal punishment and misery.

2d. That Christ the second Adam represented just as many as

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\*At these sessions of Synod the name of Cumberland Presbytery was altered to that of Nashville Presbytery.

the first, consequently made an atonement for all, “which will be testified in due time.” But that the benefit of that atonement will be only received by the true believer.

3d. That all Adam’s family are totally depraved, “concieved in sin; going astray from the womb, and all children of wrath,” therefore must “be born again,” justified and sanctified, or they never can enter into the kingdom of God.

4th. That justification is by faith alone as the INSTRUMENT; by the merits of Christ’s active and passive obedience, as the *meritorious* cause; and by the operation of God’s Spirit as the *efficient*, or active cause.

5th. That as the sinner is justified on the account of Christ’s righteousness being imputed or accounted to him; on the same account he will be enabled to go on from one degree of grace to another, in a progressive life of sanctification, until he is fit to be gathered to the garner of God, who will certainly take to glory every man who is really justified: that is, he, Christ, has become wisdom, (light to convince,) righteousness, (to justify) sanctification, (to cleanse) and redemption, (to glorify) to every truly regenerated soul.

6th. That there are three persons in one God, coequal, essential, and eternal; or the Father, Word, and Holy Ghost: that the Mediator is very God and very man; two distinct natures in the same person; therefore while the humanity obeys and suffers, there is infinite worth or merit given to that obedience and suffering, by the union of the divinity.

They dissent from the Confession—in, 1st. That there are no *eternal* reprobates.—2d. That Christ died not for a *part only*, but for *all* mankind.—3d. That all infants, dying in infancy, are saved through Christ and sanctification of the Spirit.—4th. That the Spirit of God operates on the *world*, or as coextensively as Christ has made the atonement, in such a manner as to leave all men inexcusable.

As to the doctrines of predestination and election, they think (with many eminent and modest divines who have written on the subject,) they are mysterious, they are not well pleased with the application that rigid Calvinists, or Arminians make of them. They think the truth, of *that*, as well as many other points in divinity, lies between the opposite extremes. They



are confident however, that those doctrines should not, on the one hand, be so construed as to make any thing the creature has done, or *can* do, at all meritorious in his salvation; or to lay any ground to say, "well done I;" or to take the least degree of the honor of our justification and perseverance from God's unmerited grace, and Christ's pure righteousness. On the other hand, they are equally confident those doctrines should not be so construed as to make God the author of sin, directly or indirectly; either of Adam's sin, or any subsequent sin of his fallen race; or to contradict the express and repeated declarations of God's word, on the extent of the Atonement and operations of the Spirit; or to contradict the sincerity of God's expostulations with sinners, and make his oath to have no meaning, when he swears he has no pleasure in their death; or to resolve the whole character of the Deity into his sovereignty, without a due regard to all other of his adorable attributes. Finally they think those doctrines ought to be thought and spoken of in a consistency with God's moral government, which always has for its object the happiness of his intelligent creatures, when it consists with his justice and the honor of the divine throne.

*Discipline.* Their discipline is Presbyterian. Their congregations are governed by church sessions, presbyteries, and they now have appointed to constitute a synod to be called the Cumberland Synod. They are tenacious of the Presbyterian form of church government; because they believe it to be equitable, just, and scriptural: and because it tends to cherish in their minds, and the minds of their congregations, a love of civil, as well as religious liberty; its being so congenial to the republican form of government established in these United States; which stands equally aloof from monarchy and anarchy.

On the subject of their deviation from the old rule with respect to literary qualification for the ministry, they would not be understood as undervaluing that precious handmaid to the useful work of a Gospel minister. They have in two publications, called "a circular letter," and "a reply," given abundant evidence of their anxiety to acquire and promote useful knowledge; by recommending the study of the Greek scriptures, and and by their exertions to procure a circulating library of theological, historical, and scientific books, which they are increasing

from time to time. Notwithstanding, they are persuaded that God has and does call many to preach the Gospel, who have no knowledge of the original languages, and who have been and are eminently useful in their profession. They have therefore dispensed with *that* condition, as not being *absolutely* necessary; yet they recommend it, when it can conveniently be acquired. From pursuing this course they have, as might be expected, some learned and some *less* learned preachers of the everlasting Gospel; the latter of whom appear in many instances to be as useful in promoting the work of God, as the former."

To which may be added, that Cumberland Presbyterians baptize infants, where one or both parents make credible profession of religion. Believing adults who have not been baptized in infancy, are permitted to select that mode of baptism they believe most scriptural.

At the first sessions of Synod, a committee was appointed to prepare a Confession of Faith, Catechism, and Discipline, in conformity to the avowed principles of the body. It consisted of Rev. Messrs. William M'Gee, Finis Ewing, Robert Donnel, and Thomas Calhoun. The committee simply modified the Westminster Confession, and Catechism, expunging what they believed unscriptural and supplying what they thought in accordance with the word of God. The whole was presented to the Synod of 1816, who approved of, and adopted it, as the Confession of Faith, and Discipline of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

The Cumberland Presbyterians continued gradually to increase, and their bounds were every year to enlarge, owing to the blessing of God attending the exertions of her ministers, and licensed preachers, most of whom acted as missionaries, and supplied many settlements with the means of grace, whose inhabitants, otherwise, must have perished for lack of knowledge. Every year campmeetings were held in the larger congregations at which hundreds passed from death unto life, many flourishing societies were formed, and in all quarters these men of God had the happiness of seeing the work of the Lord prospering in their hands. Indeed the field of labor had become so extensive, and the societies so numerous, that it was found impossible for the preachers to supply the pressing calls for the means of



grace, which were poured in upon them from all quarters. The Synod of A. D. 1817, after serious consideration, earnestly recommended that the whole church should hold the 4th day of May, A. D. 1817, as a day of fasting and prayer to Almighty God, to revive his work, and send forth more laborers into the vineyard. The Great Head of the Church evidently heard the cries of his people, for shortly after precious outpourings of the Spirit were experienced, and many young men presented themselves to the Presbyteries, as candidates for the ministry; some of whom afterwards became bright ornaments of the church, and able ministers of Jesus Christ. This new accession to the ministry tended greatly to extend the bounds of the denomination, and in A. D. 1820, Cumberland Presbyterians were numerous, not only in Tennessee, and Western Kentucky, but many flourishing societies existed in Alabama, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas.

The growing prosperity and usefulness of the Cumberland Presbyterian body, appears from the fact, that in 1822, the ordained ministers amounted to forty-six, besides licensed preachers and candidates, and through their instrumentality, that year, two thousand seven hundred and eighteen persons professed to obtain an interest in the blood of Christ, and five hundred and seventy-five adults were baptized by them.

From the minutes of the Synod of 1826, it appears that, at that period, the Synod included eighty ordained ministers; that during the year ending with these sessions, three thousand three hundred and five persons, through their instrumentality professed to pass from death unto life, and that seven hundred and sixty-eight adults had been baptized by them.

The bounds of the church had now become so extensive, that it was believed to cause an unnecessary waste of time, for all the members of Synod to assemble at the same place. The Presbyteries had been requested to report whether they wished a division of Synod, or not, and if a division, whether a General Assembly, or a delegated Synod should be formed. A majority reported in favor of a General Assembly—after some discussion it was resolved that the question be postponed.

At these sessions of Synod the following resolution was adopted:—

“WHEREAS, the *Synod of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church* have long considered Literature a most excellent auxiliary in promoting the interests of our holy religion, and fearing that the ordinary system of education pursued in most of our public Institutions has too great a tendency to unfit the pupil for the common employments of life, to unnerve bodily vigor, and consequently, to produce mental imbecility; and considering regular exercise essentially necessary to bodily health and mental energy, without which the great object of education must be entirely defeated—they for the advantage of the rising generation in general, and their own Candidates and Children in particular, have thought proper to adopt the following Resolutions—

*Resolved*—that this Synod establish a College, to be known by the name of the CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, in some central situation within her bounds:—that,

Our highest Judicature shall in future constitute a Board of Trustees; but for the present five Commissioners shall be chosen, any three of whom may act, to select a site, receive donations, and subscriptions, purchase land, and make the necessary arrangements for bringing the Institution into operation; and shall have power to appoint a Committee of five, either in or out of their body, to act as a Board of Trustees until the next meeting of the highest Judicature. In the selection of a site, the Commissioners shall have regard to donations, healthfulness, and other conveniences of the place, and shall have power to purchase a tract of not less than 200, nor more than 500 acres of land for the benefit of the Institution:—that

The internal government of the Seminary shall be under a President, and such Professors and Tutors, as the Trustees shall please to appoint, who shall hold their office during good behavior, or the pleasure of the Trustees:—that

Annexed to the Institution there shall be a Theological Department, under the care of the Professors of Divinity, whose duty it shall be, to teach Biblical Criticism, Ecclesiastical History &c.—and to deliver lectures twice a week during the Winter session. Until such time as the funds will justify the employment of stated Professors of the Institution, the Board of Trus



tees shall appoint men to write a certain number of lectures on subjects assigned them, (all which shall compose a body of Divinity,) whose duty it shall be to forward their lectures to whomsoever the Trustees may appoint to deliver them to the students and to examine them thereon:—that

The Committee, acting as a Board of Trustees, shall appoint a skillful manager to superintend the farming establishment, to erect cabins and other buildings, and to take charge of the boarding establishment:—that,

Every student shall be employed in manual labor not less than two, nor more than three hours every day; and for this purpose the whole number of students shall be divided into suitable classes. The Superintendent of the farm shall call on each class in rotation to perform their term of daily labor, and shall be privileged to employ them at such kind of labor, principally agricultural, as may afford them useful exercise and conduce to the interests of the Institution:—that,

So much of the produce of the farm as may be necessary shall be appropriated to the use of the boarding establishment:—that,

It shall be the duty of the Faculty to forbid the use of feather beds and to restrict the students to a frugal and wholesome diet, avoiding all luxuries:—that,

The rate of Tuition shall be thirty dollars per year, and there shall be no charge for boarding and washing, unless the necessities of the Institution require it; but in no event shall this charge exceed the sum of thirty dollars per year:—that,

The privileges of the Institution extend to all young gentlemen of good moral character, who will comply with the terms of admission:—that,

All students shall pay semi-annually in advance the sums required by the rules of the Institution:—that,

All money collected after paying the salaries of the officers of the Institution shall pass into the treasury and go to constitute a permanent fund for future exigencies: but be under the control of the Board of Trustees, who shall have liberty to appoint their Treasurer and Librarian:—that,

The Board of Trustees, and Commissioners appointed as such, shall have power to appoint a certain number of agents

to solicit donations, whose duty it shall be to report to the Board and pay over all money received—that,

Persons appointed to receive donations shall be authorized to receive money, books, horses, stock, or farming utensils:—that,

As the funds increase, the Board shall have power to make arrangements for the establishment of Professorships, and Scholarships, each of which, if founded by a Society or individuals, shall be named for, or by that Society or individual:—that,

The collegiate course, entitling a student to a Diploma, shall consist of four years regular study; and the following branches shall be taught, during the first year. English and Latin Grammar, Corderii, Selectæ e Vetri Selectæ Profanis, Virgil, and Blairs Lectures on Rhetoric Abridged. During the second year, Horace, Cicero, Sallust, Greek Grammar, Greek Testament, and Græca Minora. During the third and fourth years the following sciences: Geography, Rhetoric, Logic, Mathematics, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Astronomy and History, with such other sciences as the Faculty may direct:—that,

Candidates for the Ministry in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church shall not be received in the institution, unless they produce satisfactory testimonials from their Presbyteries, and shall not be entitled to a Diploma, until they are adjudged thoroughly acquainted with the sciences required by the discipline of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church:—that,

All the students shall have the privilege, but none shall be required to attend the Lectures on Theology, except the candidates for the ministry in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.”

The vicinity of Princeton, Caldwell county, Kentucky, was fixed upon as the most suitable place for the location of the Institution, which went into operation on the 1st of March following. Rev. F. R. Cossit, the gentleman by whom its plan had been devised, accepted of the Presidency and from that time to the present has filled the situation with honor to himself, and advantage to the church. In 1827, the Institution was chartered by the Legislature of Kentucky. This College at a very early period of its history, was blessed with gracious outpourings of the Holy Spirit; and many of the students became hopefully pious. The average number of students



has been about eighty, and it is computed that from its first institution to the present day, sixty-seven probationers for the ministry have received instructions in the College, some for a longer and other for a shorter time. The students cultivate a farm of about three hundred acres, which is generally kept by them in excellent order, and of late years they have raised all their own supplies at home. But owing to want of experience when first established, it was found that the expense of keeping up the farm was so great, that it became necessary to raise the price of board and tuition to eighty dollars per annum. The theological department has never been in active operation, owing to this, and the expenses incurred in the first establishment of the Institution, it has not yet proved so advantageous to the church as could be wished. As poor young men entering into the ministry have not been afforded those facilities which its founders fondly expected, a remedy for this evil is imperiously called for.

In 1827 the number of ordained ministers in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church had increased to one hundred and fourteen—the number of professions that year, was four thousand and six, and the number of adults baptized, nine hundred and ninety-six.

At the sessions of Synod in 1828, the subject of a General Assembly was again discussed; and a large majority being in favor of a General Assembly, Cumberland Synod was divided into four, viz: Missouri, Green River, Franklin and Columbia Synods.

The first General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, held its sessions in Princeton, Kentucky, in May 1829. Thus in the space of nineteen years, did the Cumberland Presbytery enlarge to a Synod, and from that to a General Assembly. And, from being a feeble disposed and persecuted few, through the fostering care of the Head of the Church, the body became a numerous and respectable branch of the Church of Christ; and their societies many and flourishing throughout the western and southern parts of the valley of the Mississippi. At this first Assembly, Rev. Messrs. Ogden and Bone, were appointed missionaries to travel through the eastern section of the valley of the Mississippi, to preach the Gospel, and solicit

donations for Cumberland College. They spent the following summer and autumn in the State of Ohio, and in Western Pennsylvania, preaching with power and demonstration of the Spirit, especially in Ohio, where through their instrumentality many precious souls found redemption in the blood of the Lamb. The mission of these brethren paved the way for the opening of a door for extensive usefulness to the church in Ohio, Western Pennsylvania, and the State of New York.

In January, 1831, by request of a congregation of Presbyterians in Washington county, Pennsylvania, five of its members wrote a letter to the President of Cumberland College, stating "that they had lately heard of the existence of the Cumberland Presbyterians in the West—that they had examined the brief expose of their doctrines and discipline, published in Woodward's edition of Buck's Theological Dictionary, which the congregation sincerely approved of—that although they were members of the Presbyterian church, they could not adopt its Confession of Faith in tanto, and were solicitous to become better acquainted with the Cumberland Presbyterians, who were viewed by them as their brethren in Christ Jesus;" and they requested that the President should adopt some measures to provide them, at least for a short time, with the ministrations of a Cumberland Presbyterian missionary. Mr. Cossitt informed them that he would lay their case before the next General Assembly, and urge upon that body to meet with their wishes on the subject. To this the committee replied, "Immediately on the receipt of yours, we called a meeting of the congregation, and having read your letter to them, they expressed their gratification at the prospect of becoming better acquainted with the Cumberland Presbyterian ministers. They entreated us to continue our correspondence with you, and to renew the request that your Assembly would send us a missionary for a short time. Should you succeed we wish you to inform us as early as possible, and if practicable we are solicitous for him to reach this by the first of June, which will enable us (should we agree with you in faith and practice) to obtain our dismission from the Presbyterian church, at the session of Presbytery which meets about the middle of that month. We are also authorized to state that our minister heartily approves of our proce-



ture, and will with us, attach himself to your body, as soon as an opportunity offers. We think that ninetenths of our sister congregations of the Presbyterian church believe as we do, and for some time, *especially since two of your preachers were in Washington*, an anxious desire has been manifested by them to become better acquainted with your ministry. Many who make no profession of religion are solicitous for your ministers to operate in this country; and we believe, that if your Assembly will send us one or more zealous preachers, they will under God, prove a great blessing to the church of Christ. We do request that you will press the matter upon the General Assembly with as much ardor as possible."

These documents together with others of the same nature from the western section of the State of New York, were laid before the General Assembly of 1831. The Assembly viewed these pressing calls, as an intimation that the Head of the Church was opening a more extensive field of labor to the Cumberland Presbyterian ministry, and appointed Rev. Alexander Chapman, Robert Donnel, Reuben Burrow, John Morgan, and A. M. Bryan missionaries to visit the congregations who had applied for the ministrations of Cumberland Presbyterians. Immediately after their appointment, Messrs. Chapman, Morgan and Bryan proceeded to Western Pennsylvania. Messrs. Donnel and Burrow passed through North Carolina and Virginia, and in the autumn met the others in the vicinity of Washington, Pennsylvania. The following extract of a letter to Mr. Cossitt from one of the members of the congregation in Western Pennsylvania, that had applied for a Cumberland Presbyterian missionary, exhibits the reception of the missionaries by that people, and the success of their first labors of love among them. "Messrs. Chapman, Bryan, and Morgan, reached us about three weeks ago, and were received with joy and thankfulness. Their first business was to declare their sentiments. This they did with such clearness and perspicuity, that almost all who heard them appeared to be convinced that their peculiarities were founded on the word of God, and none were disposed to controvert. Having declared their peculiar views, they dropped non-essentials, and commenced preaching Christ and him crucified; this they did with such power, and demonstration of spirit,

that many were cut to the heart, at the close of the sixth sermon preached by them; brother Morgan invited all who desired to obtain an interest in the blood of Christ, to distinguish themselves by meeting him before the stand, and to our astonishment forty-two went forward; and at this time more than a hundred have distinguished themselves. God has often revived his work among us here, but we have never before witnessed any thing to compare with the blessed work, which is now in progress among us, through the instrumentality of these missionaries from the West."

The first Cumberland Presbyterian Society in Pennsylvania was formed on the 18th of August 1831. A few weeks after its formation the members were induced to erect camps for the purpose of holding a camp meeting, which was attended with gracious outpourings of the Holy Spirit, and many, during the occasion, obtained an interest in the privilege of the sons of God. Shortly after the close of the camp meeting, the Missionaries returned to the west except Messrs Morgan and Bryan, who continued to labor with great success in that region, and formed a number of societies. During the summer of 1832, Rev. Messrs. Chapman and Harris visited these young churches, and in conjunction with the brethren already in the field, constituted the Pennsylvania Presbytery, to which several ministers formerly belonging to the Presbyterian and Methodist churches attached themselves. Rev. Milton Bird, of Logan Presbytery, also visited that region and became a member of the Presbytery and still continues to labor within its bounds. A few others from the West have also located in that country. The brethren in that Presbytery have, from time to time, been blessed with gracious outpourings of the Holy Spirit. The churches are numerous and the Presbytery has under its care about three thousand communicants.

From the minutes of the General Assembly of 1833, it appears that the Assembly had under its care six Synods and thirty two Presbyteries. That during the previous year five thousand nine hundred and seventy-seven persons had professed to obtain an interest in Christ through the instrumentality of the Cumberland Presbyterian ministry, and that one thousand one hundred and fifty adults has been baptized by them.



The following abstract of the Committee on the state of religion, adopted by the General Assembly of 1834, gives a pleasing view of the operations and state of the Church in that year.

“ The Committee appointed to report the state of Religion submitted the following:

That, in view of what the Great Head of the Church has wrought for Zion through our feeble instrumentality, we have much cause of gratitude and thanksgiving—we should be exceedingly humbled under a sense of the overwhelming goodness of God, and so far from relaxing our efforts we should be greatly encouraged to redouble our exertions. Embracing in one broad view the whole field of operation, we have seldom, if ever, had a more animating prospect than is exhibited in the reports of the several Synods. Within the bounds of some Synods, revivals have prevailed more extensively during the past year than at any former period; in others, though no extraordinary outpourings of the Spirit have been enjoyed, yet divine influence, like the gentle dews, has refreshed the hills of Zion, and watered the gardens of the Lord. God has been in the midst of his people—he has verified his promise to the heralds of the Cross—a preached gospel, attended by the energies of the Holy Ghost, has proved to be the power of God unto salvation to as many as believed. For the riches of his free grace, your committee feel constrained to glorify God, and with reverence and deep humility would exclaim, “ Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but to thy name be *all* the glory.”

Would to God we could render a like report of all your Synods and Presbyteries; but truth forbids. In some sections the cause seems to languish, and though the faithful servants of the living God have continued to occupy the field, and labor for souls, yet the borders of our beloved Zion have not been enlarged; her waste places are still a moral desert—the precious seed has been sown, but the full harvest has not yet been gathered.

It is a source of peculiar satisfaction to your committee to learn, that throughout your bounds a growing solicitude is manifested for the prosperity of the benevolent institutions of the day. We are pleased, also, to learn, that camp-meetings have been greatly multiplied during the last season; and that, as hitherto, they have been signally blessed of heaven as the favorite means

of originating extensive revivals. Great good has resulted from protracted meetings. Such we believe has been, and ever will be, the result, when those engaged in the use of the means, look beyond them, and, sensible of their own weakness, humbly rely upon God for success.

Yet whilst we acknowledge our obligations to God for his unspeakable goodness in blessing our feeble efforts, we can but take shame to ourselves that so little has been effected—that there are still within our bounds extensive fields, presenting naught but moral desolation, where thousands of precious souls are perishing for lack of the bread of life—fields that might be cultivated and a rich harvest realized, were the dormant energies of our church called into action. Within and beyond our bounds, the Macedonian cry comes up mingled with the wailings of immortal souls, perishing for that help which, though withheld, the Lord has enabled us to afford, and which he has a right to demand of us.

Could means be devised to bring all our laborers into the vineyard—could all the heralds of the cross be constantly kept upon the walls of Zion, results would be far more glorious. Then, indeed, would the wilderness and the solitary places be glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose.

We respectfully submit the following synopsis of the Synodical Reports for 1833.

*Green River Synod*—Prosperous beyond any former year—preachers and people alive to their duty—increased attention to education—increase of patronage to benevolent institutions.

*Mississippi Synod*—Prospects encouraging, but no extensive revivals—camp-meetings on the increase—Sabbath schools and Temperance Societies multiplied—number of conversions nearly double—great call for laborers—extensive fields unoccupied.

*Missouri Synod*—The good cause advancing—harmony prevails—some sections favored with revivals—some churches aroused to the importance of sustaining the Gospel ministry.

*Illinois Synod*—Revivals more extensive and permanent than during any preceeding year—some churches importunate at the Throne of Grace for an increase of laborers—many waste places—boundless fields open for cultivation.

*Columbia Synod*—Increasing interest for literary and reli-



gious institutions and benevolent enterprises—no extensive revival, except in Elk Presbytery, where there has been an unusual display of the goodness of God in the abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

*Franklin Synod*—Signally blessed of Heaven—never have the servants of the Lord in these bounds been more abundantly rewarded—camp and protracted meetings numerous—unusual devotedness in the clergy and laity have been the apparent means in producing these glorious results.

*Western District Synod*—Indications favorable—ministers have labored faithfully, and God has graciously owned their efforts to the salvation of many souls—peace and harmony prevail.

The following is the number of conversions in your different Synods:

<i>Synods.</i>	<i>Conversions.</i>
Green River,	3,432
Mississippi,	931
Missouri,	461
Illinois,	760
Columbia,	1,273
Franklin,	2,505
Western District,	1,326
	<hr/>
Aggregate,	10,688

In conclusion, our committee indulge the hope that the foregoing exhibit will produce upon your minds, as it has upon theirs, and that it will carry abroad throughout our bounds, the impression that whilst we are under the strongest obligations of gratitude to the Great Head of the Church, and have the greatest encouragement to continue our labors of love, and to cast in our mite for the erection of the temple of the living God in every heart, and the ushering in of the latter day glory—we ought to be humble, deeply humble. While the church under the banners of different denominations is making an onward and rapid advance, let us join with them in the service of our common Lord, directing our every effort against the common enemy, without weakening the power of the church militant by intestine divisions. Let us have our eye ever fixed upon the great Captain of our salvation, remembering his reproof, “No man

that does a miracle in my name, can speak lightly of me." Let our watch-word be, "the church, the whole church, the salvation of a perishing world."

The General Assembly of 1833 directed the Presbyteries to report the number of ordained ministers, licentiates and candidates, and the number of congregations and communicants in each to the next General Assembly. This, however, was neglected by nearly one half of the Presbyteries, therefore it is impossible for the author to give a correct exhibit of the statistics of the Church; but judging from the reports which were made by Presbyteries to the last General Assembly. We think that the following is not far from the numerical strength of the Church—Synods nine, Presbyteries thirty-five, ordained ministers three hundred, licensed preachers one hundred, candidates for the ministry seventy-five, communicants fifty thousand.

A press for the benefit of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was put into operation by Rev. David Lowry, in 1830. Mr. Lowry edited the Religious and Literary Intelligencer for two years, he then formed a co-partnership with the author, and they, in conjunction, commenced the publication of the Revivalist, in Nashville, in August, 1832. Before the close of the first volume, Mr. Lowry accepted the situation of Missionary to the Winebago Indians. From that time to the present the author has conducted the press on his own responsibility and at his own risk. The establishment is private property but devoted to the promotion of the cause of Christ and the interest of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

From a review of the history of this branch of the Church of Christ, it appears that the Head of Zion designed to raise it up for important purposes. At a very early period after the first settlement of the country a gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit (perhaps not surpassed by any in these latter days,) was experienced by the inhabitants of this young western empire, which was calculated to have a salutary influence in enlightening, moralizing, and sanctifying the community, and in which good men, full of the Holy Ghost, were reared up who were calculated to be greatly useful to the Church; but as the policy of sectaries is sometimes at war with the designs of Heaven, as has been related, these men had to encounter great dif-



difficulties, and opposition from that Church in which they had their spiritual birth, and to all human appearance every prospect of their future usefulness, was about to be blasted, being pronounced by the higher judicatures of the Presbyterian church disorganizers, heretical, forbidden to speak in the name of Jesus, and finally forsaken by most of those men of God, who were the honored instruments in beginning the revival, and at whose entreaties they were induced to take the field; but man's extremity is God's opportunity, and when he pleads a cause it must prosper. In his kind providence he opened a small door for usefulness before these persecuted brethren, and put it into the heart of Mr. M'Adow to aid them in constituting a Presbytery. From that day to the present He has not forsaken them, but has opened one field of labor before them after another, and instead of the Cumberland Presbytery embracing the most dangerous heresies, and proving like Jonah's Gourd; its members and ministers have firmly adhered to the doctrines they so warmly contended for during the time of their difficulties with Kentucky Synod, and the members of the Church in the space of twenty-five years have been increased fifty fold. Indeed the glorious results of their labors, and their flourishing condition at the present day; together with the unanimity of sentiment that in all things essential exist among them, demonstrate that God has been with them, and that He has approved of, and blessed their efforts to build up the waste places of Zion. These things loudly call for praise, gratitude and joy from every Cumberland Presbyterian, and it is to be hoped, that past experience will teach all the members of this branch of the Church of Christ, the importance of maintaining a Catholic spirit, and not to indulge in censuring others, who hold the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity, because in minor matters they cannot see as they see, and think as they think. Let Cumberland Presbyterians never forget the principles by which the body was governed when its members were few, and its name known only as a term of reproach. Let them remember that to God alone, they are indebted for their existence and prosperity, and if they would continue to enjoy his smiles and approbation, they must *not be high minded but fear*. Let it never be forgotten that while the Fathers of the Church believed that He could and did call men who did not

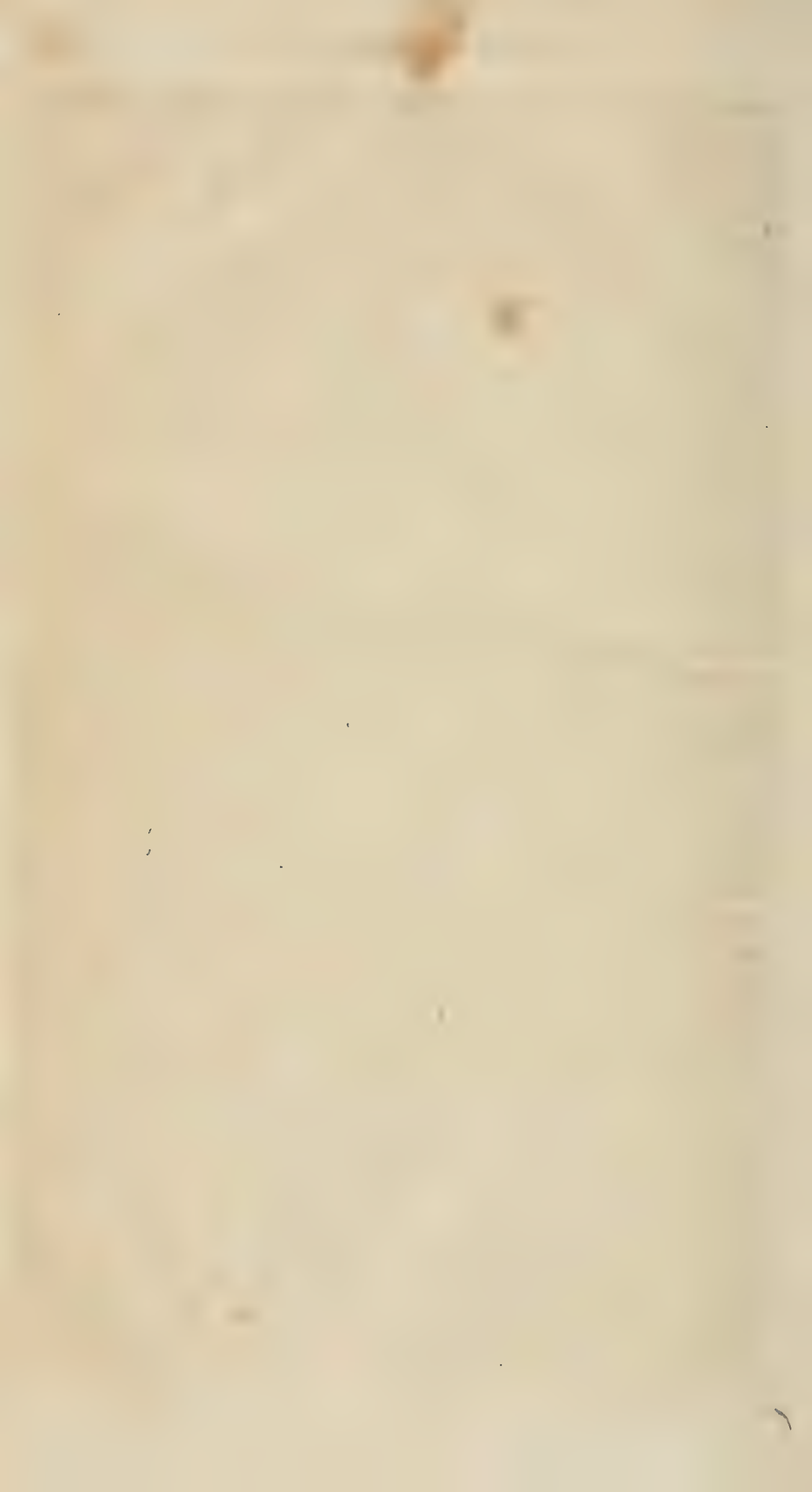
enjoy the advantage of a classical education to proclaim the Gospel of the grace of God, that bringeth salvation. Yet they all gave their testimony to the importance of learning in the ministry, when kept in its proper place; and that the discipline of the Church requires that the Gospel minister should be an intelligent man. Those who do not sustain this character, should not be permitted to officiate as the ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ, for ignorant men are in danger of bringing a reproach upon His cause. Therefore all should be impressed with the absolute necessity of requiring, that every candidate for ordination shall in literary attainments come up to the spirit of the discipline of the Church. The attainments there laid down, with a proper knowledge of human nature, and an intimate acquaintance with the sacred oracles, will render their possessor respectable, and enable him to be useful to society—and they are so easily attained that the man who has the cause of Christ at heart can acquire them by dint of industry and perseverance in almost any circumstance of life. It is also important that many Cumberland P. Ministers should be learned, in all the languages and sciences, and we do most fervently pray that the Church will speedily afford better facilities to those who have capacity and disposition to acquire them. Yet we trust the day will never come, when the Cumberland Presbyterian Church will require as a pre-requisite to the office of a Gospel minister higher literary attainments than are now laid down in the discipline of the Church. And yet shew we a more excellent way to insure the continuance of the approbation and blessing in Heaven. Let Cumberland Presbyterians, as they have heretofore done, continue to support all the benevolent institutions of the day; yea let them do tenfold more in their behalf. Let them not be conformed to the maxims and customs of this world. Let them *study* how to do good. Let them strive after high attainments in holiness. Let them be ready to make any sacrifice for the cause of their Redeemer. Let them cultivate a spirit of brotherly love for all the sister churches. Let them at all times hold themselves ready for union, on proper principles, with the other evangelical denominations, especially with that church from which they have descended. Above all, let them lie low



in the dust before God, and they cannot but prosper, and that gloriously.

We conclude with the following extract from a letter to the author by Rev. Finis Ewing, to whom under God our branch of the church is greatly indebted for its existence and usefulness.

"Immediately after the adjournment of our first Presbytery, Messrs. King, M'Lean, and myself left Bro. M'Adow's to return home; I, that day inclined much to ride alone. I felt blessed with the immediate presence of God; my mind was clear as noon-day, that God *had* and *did* approbate our late act. But I got into deep contemplation. We had just launched our *small* bark on a most tempestuous ocean, surrounded by wicked men, and devils; and we would be violently opposed by different sectaries, especially by a part of the "Mother Church" &c. &c. The picture presented to my mind was truly appalling. But while I thus mused, fearing and trembling, as it were, and praying, the Holy Spirit presented to my mind, in the clearest and most impressive manner, that we had nothing to fear from sectaries, wicked men, and devils, provided we would be *humble*, ALWAYS HUMBLE, and dependent upon God. The *clear*, the *deep*, the *abiding* impression inspired *confidence*, and I went on my way rejoicing, under a sweet sense of the smiles and approbation of my reconciled God, and a determination to cultivate humility and dependence in my own soul, and to impress them, deeply impress them on the minds of my brethren. And such *was* and *is* my confidence, that these impressions were from God, that I can safely declare, from that day to this, (nearly 25 years,) I never dreaded opposition from any, and every other quarter, so much as a spirit of *pride* and self-confidence in our own denomination. On *this* account I feared a General Assembly. On this account I am afraid of a great Theological Seminary, however much such an institution may be needed. On this account, I even sometimes tremble, while I rejoice at the almost unparalleled growth of our denomination. And I would say to this, and to all future generations of Cumberland Presbyterians, if you would prosper, *humble*, be *benumb*LE, BE HUMBLE."





## A P P E N D I X .

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### REV. WILLIAM M'GEE.

REV. WM. M'GEE was born and raised in Randolph county, North Carolina; he was educated under Dr. Caldwell, of Guilford county. We have been informed that he was at that institution during the revival which took place there, under the ministrations of Mr. M'Gready, and was one of its subjects. He was licensed as a probationer for the Holy Ministry about the year, A. D. 1792. From his first appearance in the ministry, Mr. M'Gee acquired and maintained the character of a very zealous, spiritual and animated preacher. He thundered the curses of Sinai with awful power upon the ears of the impenitent, and was often successful in his endeavors, under Heaven, to reach their hearts. He removed to Cumberland country, Tennessee, in the year, A. D. 1794, where, on his arrival, he took the pastoral charge of the Shiloh congregation, in Sumner county. After his location in this congregation, Mr. M'Gee, for a season, relapsed from his former zeal and spirituality. Some differences of opinion took place between him and his session in relation to experimental religion, and the terms of admission into the church; he insisting that none should be admitted to church privileges, except those who could give a satisfactory history of their religious exercises; the time when, and the place where they passed from death unto life; the elders of the church, were unanimously of a different opinion.—Owing to these differences between himself and his session, Mr. M'Gee resigned his office of pastor of Shiloh congregation, and took charge of the Beech and Ridge societies.

When the revival of 1800 appeared, Mr. M'Gee shook off his lethargy and preached with great power and demonstration of the Spirit. He was a warm supporter of the measures of Cumberland Presbytery, and continued to labor with the young men he had aided in brining into the field until his death, except during a short period, while he was embarrassed in mind concerning the system of doctrine embraced by the Cumberland body; and such were his conscientious scruples, that during that time he entirely refrained from the exercise of the office of a Gospel Minister. Mr. M'Gee died in the triumphs of faith, in the year, A. D. 1814, his memory must ever be dear to all who bear the Cumberland Presbyterian name.

The following, from Rev. Robert Donnel, in reply to some enquiries put by us to him concerning Mr. M'Gee, will be read with interest:—

“The Rev. Mr. M'Gee refused to aid in constituting the first Presbytery, and to join it when constituted, not because he did not think they had a legal right to do so according to ecclesiastical rules; but because he had not himself, and knew of no others that had a system of Doctrines lying between Calvinism and Arminianism and although he and the older brethren agreed, that fatality was in the Calvinistic system, and too much legality in the Arminian, yet none of them had *drawn* a line between them to satisfy his mind; and to constitute a new Christian Branch, and not adopt any creed already written, and no one of their own, he thought improper. And had not his mind become satisfied relative to the foundation and out lines of such a system, he, perhaps, never would have connected himself with a church again. But in the summer after the first Presbytery was constituted, he was much interested on this subject; and made it his constant prayer, as well as meditation; and while thus engaged, the system of divine government opened up to his mind, which reconciled the moral and sovereign character of God to him; he soon after commenced talking in public, (he would not preach, and had not for sometime,) and the more he thought, read and said, the more clear his mind became; and although he did not live long enough to make out every part of the system, yet he lived to be fully satisfied, that there was a system, which, if rightly understood, would reconcile all the jarring points in the Christian world. Of this I believe he was fully satisfied—he has often expressed himself thus to the writer. He was a man of deep, penetrating, clear thought, and would not affirm what he did not know, and what he knew he could say, or make known to others. He has often remarked to me, that he had heard others say, that they knew, but could not communicate, but when he knew, he could always tell. In conversation he would often recur to the Doctrine of Election and Reprobation, which many would say they knew, and would try to explain, but could not; he would say they did not understand it, for if they did, they could make it harmonize. Mr. M'Gee was profound—He thought soberly; deliberated fairly, and executed promptly—he was extremely cautious until he knew what to do, and then he was the man of energy.

“It would be in vain for me to attempt an eulogy, and, therefore, I shall conclude by saying, his head was clear, his heart was warm, his language was plain, his figures were striking, his doctrines were true, his arguments were unanswerable, his applications were as Nathan to David. His moral character was fair, and his piety undisputed; the seals to his ministry were many, and some of them yet live to be his organs to the Churches, and by them, he being dead, yet speaketh. But, doubtless, while he thus speaks on earth, many are the tongues in Heaven that praise God, that he ever lived on earth to minister salvation in the name of Jesus, while he amidst the throng, lies low before the throne, and lower still at every note of praise, in which his voice is heard before the throne.

“O how often have I heard him preach Christ on earth, and when his pulpit service closed, have seen him on the floor, or ground, sometimes exhorting all around him, at other times sitting, or lying in the dust, with a heart filled to overflowing, tears streaming down his cheeks, when the tide of divine love rose so high in his soul, that his tongue could only exclaim JESUS, JESUS, JESUS.”



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## REV. WILLIAM HODGE.

This eminently useful Minister of the Gospel was a native of North Carolina. When somewhat advanced in life, he professed to obtain an interest in the blood of Christ, under the ministerial labors of the Rev. Mr. Debo, pastor of the Hawfield congregation, Guilford county, N. Carolina. Shortly after he professed religion, Mr. Hodge was the subject of serious impressions on the subject of the Gospel Ministry, but being in poor circumstances, with a wife and several children looking to him for a support, his education limited, and having no means to procure the attainments required by the discipline of the Presbyterian church, he had to encounter many difficulties of a serious nature. After mature deliberation he at length left his family and placed himself under the tuition of Dr. Caldwell, who conducted a seminary thirty miles distant from the residence of Mr. Hodge. This step exposed him to the censure of his friends, who expressed their opinion, that he should have remained at home and provided for his family; forgetting that those who are called to the work of a minister of Jesus Christ must forsake father, and mother, and wife, and children when required by their Divine Master. Having completed his education, Mr. Hodge was licensed as a probationer for the Holy Ministry in the year A. D. 1789, or 90. Shortly after his licensure he was called to the pastoral charge of the Hawfield congregation, of which he, himself, had been for years a member. In this station he labored with great zeal and fidelity, which excited much opposition among formal professors, who exclaimed, "is not this man our neighbor, with whom we have been long acquainted; by what authority does he disturb our repose, and mar our peace? 'These are hard sayings, who can bear them?'" A number of such professors withdrew from his ministrations; but Mr. Hodge continued faithfully and spiritually to preach Christ as the sinner's only hope and refuge. The result was a gracious revival of religion, during which, many a heavy groan was heard in his church, and the enquiry was often extorted from those who before were thoughtless and impenitent, "What shall we do to be saved?" And many precious souls found redemption in the blood of the Lamb.

Mr. Hodge removed to Tennessee in the spring of, A. D. 1800. During the summer of that year, he was invited by the Shiloh congregation to succeed Mr. M'Gee, in the pastoral office, which he accepted. Here this zealous minister of Jesus Christ had again to encounter difficulties of a very serious nature. As immediately upon the appearance of the Revival, his congregation became divided into two parties. The one the warm friends of that glorious work, and the other its violent opposers. Those who opposed the work, claimed to be the majority, took possession of the church, and closed the doors against Mr. Hodge and his friends. The affair was taken before the Presbytery, which decided in favor of Mr. Hodge and the revival party. The others became highly offended, withdrew from the care of the Presbytery, formed themselves into a distinct society, called the orderly part of Shiloh congregation, and called Thomas B. Cruikhead, the staunch opposer of the revival and the measures of the revival members of Presbytery, as their pastor.

Mr. Hodge was second only to Mr. M'Gready, in promoting the revival of 1800. He was also very active in prosecuting the measures that resulted in the formation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and continued with the young

men until nearly the close of their difficulties; but finally returned to the communion of the Presbyterian Church. Various reasons have been assigned for his leaving the young men to struggle with their difficulties. It is most probable, that neither Mr. Hodge, nor Mr. M'Gready had the smallest expectation, that their measures would result in the separation of the young men, and the churches under their care from the Presbyterian Church. And it must be acknowledged, that judging from appearances, the prospect of their final success was exceedingly dark. Therefore, we are disposed to believe that, guided by what most men would call prudential reasons, Mr. Hodge thought it most advisable to return to the communion of that church, of which he had so long been a member. If we be correct, the result proved that he was greatly mistaken. And, perhaps, it was well for the church that the young men were deprived of the countenance and council of the most active and influential of the revival members of Cumberland Presbytery. As thereby, they, no doubt, were led to greater reliance upon God, who effected such great things for them. And the fact, that a few inexperienced young men, some of whom had enjoyed but limited advantages in early life, in spite of the flood of opposition and persecution they had to encounter, were enabled to form themselves into a useful branch of the Church of Jesus Christ; and, in the space of twenty short years, to take a stand among the most evangelical and useful denominations of the day, is a clear testimony, that God plead their cause, and that he designed to use them for great and glorious purposes.

After Mr. Hodge returned to the communion of the Presbyterian Church he frequently travelled as a missionary in the frontier settlements, but he no more witnessed such extensively refreshing seasons as he enjoyed during the progress of the great revival of 1800. He encountered many and distressing difficulties in his congregation at Shiloh, and in the year, A. D. 1818, he resigned the pastoral charge of that church and moved to Logan county, Kentucky; where he died in 1819 or 20. Mr. Hodge, if we may judge from his written discourses in his public exhibitions, was the reverse of Mr. M'Gready, whose great excellency consisted in the very awful manner in which he denounced the terrors of the law, and his close heart searching exposures of the unsound foundations of unregenerate professors. Not so with Mr. Hodge, who appears to have been a Son of consolation, and his sermons, when attended by the influences of the Holy Spirit, must have fallen upon the ears and hearts of his hearers as the dews of Heaven. Although he sometimes preached in a close and pointed manner; yet his great excellency appears to have been in his skill, under God, to heal the broken hearted, and bind up their wounds. Cumberland Presbyterians should always reflect upon his memory with gratitude, veneration and respect. For although he finally became discouraged and walked no more with them, he did much under God to build up and sustain the churches in the dark day of adversity, and he gave some good evidences that he loved them to the end. Peace to his ashes. Let the tear of charity blot out his foibles; he was but a man, and who among the sons of men are perfect in the present state.



C—PAGE 574.

## REV. ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

This eminently pious and beloved Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, was born in Orange county, North Carolina, A. D. 1764. His parents being pious, he enjoyed the high privilege of having been taught the scriptures from his infancy, and at a very early period he became deeply impressed with a sense of his lost estate, and felt great anxiety for the salvation of his soul. After remaining in this condition for sometime, he became the subject of the comforting influences of the Holy Spirit, and took great delight in reading the Sacred Scriptures. But being very young, and none of his youthful companions having the same views and feelings with himself, and as he lived in a neighborhood, where the life and power of religion were scarcely known, he relapsed into a state of coldness, and caught somewhat of the spirit of his associates. In this condition he remained until the period of his marriage, when he aroused from his lethargy, became a man of prayer, and spent his leisure hours in reading the Scriptures, and other religious works. For sometime he was the subject of much perplexity concerning the reality of his change of heart; but becoming satisfied on this important subject, he attached himself to the Presbyterian Church, and made such advances in piety, and religious knowledge, that in a very short time his influence was felt by all with whom he associated. Such was his zeal for God, that many of his friends were led by his example to forsake their sins, and to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their sovereign Lord; and a flourishing society was established in his neighborhood, in which he acted as ruling Elder.

Mr. Anderson removed to Tennessee, in A. D. 1798, and became a member of the Shiloh congregation. When he heard of the *strange* work in progress in Mr. McGready's congregations, he determined to see it for himself, and was one of those who were present, at the Camp-meeting at Gasper river church, from Shiloh. He was convinced that the astonishing effects upon the people were produced by the mighty power of God. He returned home glorifying God for what his eyes had seen, and his heart had felt; and was zealously and actively engaged in the blessed revival that immediately after appeared in Shiloh, and the neighboring congregations. Being often called upon to pray at the social prayer-meetings, and the Spirit within him constraining him to exhort the unconverted to flee the wrath to come, it was soon discovered, that he possessed no ordinary gifts; in consequence of which, when the people in the neighboring settlements, who had no minister settled amongst them, became aroused to a sense of their exposure to misery, they would earnestly intreat Mr. Anderson to visit them, and hold prayer-meetings among them, at which he often exhorted with great power, and his humble efforts were owned of Heaven, in the salvation of many precious souls. As the Presbyterian ministers in the country, were very few, they encouraged Mr. Anderson, and others, to visit the distant congregations, with license to exhort and catechise.

Before his removal from North Carolina, Mr. Anderson labored under serious impressions that he ought to preach Christ, but he shrank from the thought, owing to his want of literary attainments, and the impossibility of procuring them, circumstanced as he was, with a helpless family, looking to him for support. The exercise of his gifts at the commencement of the revival in Cumberland country, renewed his impressions—still, however, he could not bear the thought of devot-

ing himself to the ministry; and to quiet his conscience, he continued to exhort. This, however, only tended to deepen his impressions. He was in this embarrassed state of mind, when he was informed, that owing to the destitute state of the country, the Presbytery were willing to license those who appeared to possess an aptness to teach, although they had not acquired the literary attainments required by the book of discipline; and that if he would present himself as a candidate for the ministry, his want of classical learning, would constitute no serious objection. This information deprived him of his chief apology. And although he had a numerous and helpless family depending for support upon his exertions; God having opened such a door before him, that he could no longer keep peace with his conscience; he committed his family to the protection of Him who feedeth the young ravens, and clothes the lilies of the field; and he devoted himself to the great work to which he believed the Head of the Church was calling him. Immediately upon being licensed, he hired a person to superintend his farm, and he acted as an itinerant preacher, travelling over a large extent of country, exposed to many trials and privations. In this new sphere, Mr. Anderson manifested great zeal for the cause of his Divine Master. Nor did he labor in vain, and spend his strength for naught, for such a holy unction attended his ministrations, that many, very many precious souls, through his instrumentality, were savingly converted to God. He continued to labor with great success, and without receiving any, or very little pecuniary remuneration, until the time of his death, which was in February, 1804, and while travelling in Kentucky, proclaiming salvation through Christ Jesus to perishing sinners.

Mr. Anderson was a man of no ordinary mind, he possessed very clear views of Divine truth, and a happy facility of communicating his ideas in an interesting manner to his hearers. He had a commanding voice, and a tender accent. While he could thunder the causes of the law like the voice of God upon Mount Sinai, he could also moisten his words with his tears. While like Peter, he was a bold man, and could put scoffers and infidels to shame. He could also clothe his ideas in the most familiar language, and was an instructor of babes in Christ. He, on no occasion, indulged in controversial theology, but uniformly preached Christ, and him crucified. He carefully cultivated a spirit of love and friendship with all denominations. By all parties he was beloved. By the churches under the care of the revival members of Cumberland Presbytery, he was idolized. Therefore, for good and wise purposes, he was removed from the walls of Zion; and that too, immediately before that fearful storm burst upon the church, for whose benefit he labored, which nearly crushed, and annihilated all their prospects. The approach of that storm, Mr. Anderson saw, and being a man of a meek and quiet spirit, he frequently expressed his desire, that if consistent with the will of Heaven, he might not witness it. God heard and answered his prayer, by removing him from the evil to come. His career was short, but bright: and at the resurrection of the great day, many who will be his crown of rejoicing, will arise and call him blessed.

The great success that attended the ministrations of Mr. Anderson, the respect with which he was treated by men of all parties, and the affectionate regard entertained for him by all the followers of Jesus Christ, who were acquainted with him, clearly prove, that some men who have not enjoyed the advantages of a classic and scientific education, may be eminently useful in promoting the cause of Zion.



D—PAGE 596.

## REV. ALEXANDER CHAPMAN.

This eminently useful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, was born in the State of Pennsylvania, on the 2d day of January, 1776. His father emigrated to this country at an early period and settled in Sumner county, Tennessee. About the commencement of the revival in Cumberland County, he became deeply impressed on the subject of the salvation of his soul. After remaining in this condition for a considerable time he obtained a clear and satisfactory evidence, that his sins were pardoned, and his iniquities covered. Immediately after his conversion, he felt it his duty to devote himself to the work of the ministry. By the first Cumberland Presbytery he was licensed to exhort and catechise, and having given satisfactory evidence, that he possessed an aptness to teach, he was received as a candidate for the ministry; and was one of the number who went through all the troubles, trials and persecutions of the Cumberland body, when it struggled for existence. He was licensed as a probationer, and ordained to the whole work of the ministry, shortly after the constitution of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and until the time of his death he sustained the character of an eminently useful minister of Jesus Christ. He married and settled in Morgan county, Kentucky, when he was very young, and had the happiness of seeing a large and flourishing society spring up, as the fruits of his labors of love. But Mr. Chapman did not confine his labors to his own vicinity, he travelled extensively and operated with great success in Upper Kentucky, in Indiana, and Western Pennsylvania; and few men, of any denomination, have been more useful in promoting the cause of Christ in the West than Mr. Chapman. He died in the triumphs of faith, at his own residence on the 15th Sept. 1834, and left, not only his family, but a whole denomination of Christians in tears at his loss.

Mr. Chapman's disposition was of the most meek and placid nature, which recommended him to the favor and friendship of all who became acquainted with him.—From what we have learned of him, when he was a young man he treated the opinions and council of those who were more experienced in the ministry than himself with deference and respect; and many ministers, now living, can bear witness to his kind and affectionate conduct to those who were his juniors; indeed to all the young men under the care of the Presbytery of which he was a member, he was a prudent counsellor, an affectionate father; he took, a deep interest in their temporal and spiritual welfare. He never lorded it over the young men under his guidance, but by his winning affability he secured the affections of all, who loved him as a brother, and revered him as a father.

He was not what the world would call a great man, but he was far better, he was emphatically a GOOD MAN and full of the Holy Ghost. His human learning was limited, but he was deeply versed in the scriptures. His address was peculiarly pleasing, and as his communion with God was almost constant, he rarely failed to reach the hearts of his hearers. The character of his discourses, especially when he addressed the followers of Christ was generally of the most encouraging and consoling nature, but to the self-deceiver he showed no quarters. He dwelt much upon the necessity of knowing where, and when we are converted to God; "upon the new views, new joys," and new course of conduct of the true believer. His labors were blessed to the souls of thousands, who through his instrumentality were led to Jesus Christ; and we believe we are not mistaken

when we say that scores now in the Gospel Ministry claim him as the honored instrument in bringing them from a state of sin to a knowledge of God and of his son Jesus Christ. The last time we had the pleasure of hearing him was at the General Assembly of 1834, when he presided at the Sacramental board; he then appeared to have some forebodings that he would no more do this in remembrance of Christ with his brethren in the ministry.—He dwelt much on the happiness of heaven—he alluded to his gray-hairs, and mentioned the probability that in a short time he should leave the walls of Zion, his words fell upon the hearts of his brethren like the rain upon the parched and thirsty ground. Little did we then think that he was addressing us for the last time, and that we should hear his voice no more, until we heard it among the redeemed, crying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive riches, and power, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”

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REV. JAMES M'GREADY.

Mr. M'Gready died in Henderson county, Kentucky, in February, 1817. In the fall of 1816 he attended a Cumberland Presbyterian Camp-meeting near Evansville, Indiana, and preached with great power and demonstration of the Spirit. At the close of a very awful discourse, viz: “The Character, History and End of the Fool,” one of his published sermons. He came out of the pulpit, called up the anxious, and prayed for them with great fervency. When he closed, he arose from his knees and said with a loud voice; “O blessed be God I this day feel the same holy fire that filled my soul sixteen years ago, during the glorious revival of 1800.” At the close of the services he retired with Messrs. Harris and Chapman, and gave them much encouragement. Brethren, said he, “Go on, God is with you; be humble, and he will continue to bless you.”

Shortly previous to his death, he remarked to some of the leading members of one of his congregations, in what was then called Rolleson's settlement. “Brethren, when I am dead and gone, the Cumberland Presbyterians will come among you and occupy this field; go with them, they are a people of God.” While Mr. M'Gready lived no Cumberland preacher operated near his congregations through respect toward him they revered. After his death they visited the congregation mentioned above, nearly all of whom became Cumberland Presbyterians.

The following is a very just exhibit of the character of this holy and eminently useful Minister of Jesus Christ, written by Rev. John Andrews.

“From the conduct and conversation of Mr. M'Gready, there is abundant evidence to believe that he was not only a subject of divine grace and unfeigned piety, but that he was favored with great nearness to God and intimate communion with him. Like Enoch, he walked with God; like Jacob, he wrestled with God, by fervent persevering supplications, for a blessing on himself and others, and prevailed; like Elijah, he was very jealous for the Lord God of hosts, and regarded his kingdom as the great end of his existence on earth, to which all other designs ought to be subordinate; like Job, he deeply abhorred himself, repenting, as it were, in dust and ashes, when he was enabled to behold the purity of God



and his own disconformity to his holy nature; like the apostle Paul, he counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, his Lord; and, like him, he felt great delight in preaching to his fellow men the unsearchable riches of Christ. He was remarkably plain in his dress and manners; but very familiar, communicative, and interesting in his conversation. He possessed a sound understanding, and a moderate share of human learning. The style of his sermons was not polished, but perspicuous and pointed; and his manner of address was universally solemn and impressive. As a preacher, he was highly esteemed by the humble followers of the Lamb, who relished the precious truths which he clearly exhibited to their view; but he was hated, and sometimes bitterly reproached and persecuted, not only by the openly vicious and profane, but by many nominal Christians, or formal professors, who could not bear his heart-searching and penetrating addresses, and the indignation of the Almighty against the ungodly, which, as a son of thunder, he clearly presented to the view of their guilty mind, from the awful denunciations of the Word of Truth. Although he did not fail to preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified, to laboring and heavy laden sinners, and to administer the consolation which the gospel speaks to humble believers; yet he was more distinguished by a talent for depicting the guilty and deplorable situation of impenitent sinners, and the awful consequences of their rebellion against God, without speedy repentance unto life and a living faith in the blood of sprinkling. There is reason to believe that his faithful and indefatigable labors in the gospel of Christ were crowned with a great degree of success, and that he was honored as an instrument in the conviction and conversion of many sinners, and more especially in the commencement and progress of several powerful revivals of religion, in different places, during which he labored with distinguished zeal and activity.

"We shall conclude our remarks by observing, that some of the traits in Mr. McGready's character as a Christian, which are worthy of our imitation, were his fervent piety, his unaffected humility, his earnest, persevering supplications at the Throne of Grace, his resignation to the will of God under the afflictions, bereavements and poverty, with which he was tried in this world, his cheerful reliance on God's kind and watchful providence and confidence in his great and precious promises, and his contempt of the pomp and vanities of this world, to which he seemed to be, in a great degree, crucified. And, as a minister of the gospel, he ought to be imitated in his regard to the honor of God and the salvation of souls, his vigorous and zealous exertions to promote these grand objects, his fidelity in declaring the whole counsel of God, and his patience in bearing the revilings of the ungodly."

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G—PAGE 645.

#### REV. SAMUEL M'ADOW.

Rev. Samuel M'Adow is still in life, but extremely aged and infirm. Owing to ill health, he has for many years declined officiating as a minister of the Gospel. Being in poor circumstances, the General Assembly, at a late session, passed a resolution to support him while he lived, and to aid in rendering his last days on earth as comfortable as possible. All Cumberland Presbyterians should

feel interested in this resolution. For although Mr. M'Adow has not preached extensively among the Churches for many years, yet to him under God, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church is in a good degree indebted for the Constitution of its first Presbytery.

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### CIRCULAR LETTER,

*Addressed to the Societies and Brethren of the Presbyterian Church, recently under the care of the Council, by the late Cumberland Presbytery; in which there is a correct statement of the origin, progress and termination of the difference between the Synod of Kentucky, and the former Presbytery of Cumberland.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—The time is at last come, when we must either sacrifice our religious liberties and conscience, to what we judge unreasonable demands, cease our endeavors to promote the work of God among you as we have hitherto done, or constitute a Presbytery separate from the Synod of Kentucky. We choose the latter as the only alternative, in which we can have the answer of a good conscience. We therefore deem it expedient to give you a retrospective view of the causes, together with the progressive means, by which matters have been brought to this issue.

A number of you will easily recollect, that about the close of the last century, or beginning of the present, God, in a very remarkable manner, began to revive his work amongst the inhabitants of this western country. The first symptoms of which appeared under the ministerial labors of the Rev. James M'Gready, in Logan county. At the first commencement of this glorious revival, as also in its progress, the bodily affections and exercises of a number of those who were its subjects, were very uncommon. This soon caused a rumor to go abroad, and the people from every quarter *came out to see*. The consequence of which was, they not only had their curiosity satisfied, but a great number had their hearts deeply affected. This, in the hand of God, was a blessed mean of spreading the work through various parts of our country. For a while, at first, all the ministers in our bounds, seemed to participate in the glorious effusion of the Holy Spirit, and correspondent to this, proclaimed themselves friends to the REVIVAL. But alas! it was soon after discoverable, that some of them had changed their opinion, otherwise they had never been well established. The consequence of this apparent change, may easily be inferred; notwithstanding the work still progressed. And although the few who remained friends to the revival, labored in the work of the Ministry *night and day*, yet the cries of the people for more preaching, were incessant; and those cries soon became so general, that they were heard from many parts of an extensive frontier. The ministers, in return, could only pity, and pray for them; the congregations being so numerous, and in such a scattered situation, that they could not by any possible endeavor supply them.

About this time, a venerable Father in the ministry, Rev. David Rice, who was then resident in one of the upper counties of Kentucky, came down and attended a communion with some of our preachers in a vacant congregation; and he, having learned the situation of our country, and the pressing demand that there was for more preaching, proposed the plan of encouraging such a



mongst us, as appeared to be men of good talents, and who also discovered a disposition to exercise their gifts in a public way, to preach the gospel, although they might not have acquired that degree of human education, which the letter of discipline requires. This proposition was truly pleasing to our preachers, and indeed it found general acceptance among the people, as soon as intimations thereof were given. The consequence was, an uncommon spirit of prayer now seemed to prevail throughout the societies, that the great Head of the church would, not only open an effectual door into the ministry, but also that he would raise up, qualify, and bring men into that sacred office, whose labors he would own and bless. And, brethren, that God who never told *Israel to seek him in vain*, evidently heard and answered the prayers of his people. Some, whose minds had been previously impressed with the duty of calling sinners to repentance, and of bearing public testimony to the work of God and the religion of Jesus Christ, and upon whom also the eyes of the church for some time had been fixed with a degree of expectation, now made their exercise of mind on this subject, known to their Fathers in the ministry. The prospect was truly pleasing to the preachers, yet they considered it expedient to act with the greatest caution; for although the step about to be taken, was not unprecedented in the Presbyterian church, yet, seeing it was out of the common track, they were well aware that some of their brethren in the ministry would oppose the measure. However, they ventured to encourage three or four of the young men to prepare written discourses, and present them to the Transylvania Presbytery as a specimen of their abilities. They accordingly prepared discourses, and at the next stated session of said Presbytery, their case was brought before that reverend body. They met with warm opposition, arising principally, however, from a quarter rather inimical to the revival. But after a lengthy conversation on the subject, in which there was much altercation, a majority of the members consented and agreed, that the young men might be permitted to read their discourses to an aged member alone, who should make report to the Judicature. We believe the report was favorable. It was then directed, as well as we can recollect, that those men should prepare other discourses to be read at the next Presbytery. They accordingly prepared, and three of them attended; but, as soon as the subject of their case was resumed, a warm debate ensued. At length, however, a majority of the members agreed to hear their discourses. After they were read, the question was put: "Shall these men be received as candidates for the ministry?" The vote being taken, one of the three was received, and two rejected by a majority of one vote only. This circumstance much depressed the spirits of a number of the preachers, who were real friends to the revival, and likewise the congregations generally, who had so earnestly desired their licensure; but more especially the spirits of those two candidates were depressed. They were men in a matrimonial state, and could not consistently with those relative duties, by which they were bound to their families, go and acquire the knowledge of all those forms of literature required by the book of discipline. Fain would they have returned home, and solaced themselves in the enjoyment of their domestic comforts, as private christians, if they could have done so, and kept a good conscience; but this they could not do; nor could they with clearness become members of any other christian society, where the ministerial door was not so difficult, and consequently, where they might have been at liberty to exercise their popular talents with approbation. No: they were attached to all

the essential doctrines, and likewise the discipline of the Presbyterian church. It was in this church they were early dedicated to God by their parents, and in this church they first felt the power of the Gospel upon their hearts, and tasted the sweetness of that grace, which brings salvation to man. Therefore, in the communion of this church they earnestly desired to live and die.

By this time a number of others, who were generally esteemed eminent for gifts and piety, together with those who had already offered as candidates, became solemnly impressed to proclaim the word of life and salvation to sinners. But alas! the door of admittance seemed to be shut against them.

In this dark state of matters, both the ministers themselves, and likewise the candidates who had already offered, and others who were looking forward towards the ministry, together with all the societies in our bounds began now, in good earnest, to realize the necessity of crying mightily to that God, who has church judicatures in his hands, as well as the hearts of individuals. In the mean time, candidates, and other eminent characters, who were assiduously endeavoring in one way or another to promote the work of God, were encouraged by their fathers in the ministry to continue the exercise of their gifts in a way of public exhortation, which several of them did, laboring much till the next Presbytery; at which time several petitions were presented, with hundreds of signatures, praying the Presbytery to license and send to their relief certain denominated persons. The subject was again taken into consideration, after which the Presbytery that was personally acquainted with those men embraced in the petitions, knowing their piety, soundness in the faith, *aptness to teach*, &c. and taking into view the situation of the congregations, and the extraordinary demand for preaching, determined to hear trial sermons from three or four of them, (at the then present session) to be considered as popular discourses: which, accordingly were delivered, and sustained by a large majority of the judicature. And after an examination on various subjects, touching the ministry, which was also sustained, they were "licensed to preach the gospel within the bounds of the Transylvania Presbytery, or wherever else God, in his providence, might call them."

Certain members who had always been opposed to the measure, entered their protest against the proceedings of the majority. But the majority were not deterred thereby, from pursuing in their official capacity, that method, which they conscientiously believed best calculated to promote the Redeemer's kingdom in the world.

The Synod not long after this, divided the Transylvania Presbytery, and formed what was called the Cumberland Presbytery, the bounds of which included all the members that attended the preceding session of the Transylvania Presbytery. This act gave a decided majority in the new Presbytery to the promoters of the revival, and those who were friendly to the licensure of the aforementioned young men; which majority ever after continued and increased until the Presbytery were dissolved.

The licensing of these men, on the petition of the congregations, seemed to be a mean in God's hand of increasing, instead of decreasing, the demand for supplies. They, (the preachers,) *laboring both night and day*, leaving their families for a considerable length of time, preaching the word, planting new societies, and watering those that were planted, would necessarily increase such demand, if attended with divine influence. And, brethren, we need only appeal to many of you



to witness the success that evidently attended those men's labors. The feeling and experience of your own hearts are better evidences to you on that subject, than all the reasons that could be advanced. *Though you may have ten thousand instructors, yet you have not many fathers in Christ.*

The Presbytery, in pursuing what they believed to be their duty, continued from time to time to license and ordain such men, both learned and unlearned, (what is meant by unlearned here, is not a want of common English education,) as they thought would be useful laborers in the vineyard of the Lord. And, if the old maxim be a good one, ("judge of causes by their effects,") the Presbytery will never have just cause to regret that they engaged in, and pursued such measures: for it is an incontestible fact judging by our Lord's rule, (*By their fruit shall ye kn w them*) that there are multitudes of *both men and women* who will have cause to rejoice eternally that ever they heard those men preach a crucified Christ.

The members who entered their protest, sent a petition to the next session of Synod, referring them to the protest, "which they thought should have operated as an appeal," in which they complained of various irregularities in the Cumberland Presbytery with respect to the licensure and ordination of men to the ministry. The Synod at that time did or said but little about the matter; but at their succeeding session they appointed a commission of Synod to meet shortly afterwards in the bounds of Cumberland Presbytery, at Gasper river, and directed certain members of the Commission to cite previously to that meeting, all our preachers, licentiates, candidates, and public exhorters,\* who generally met in obedience to the citation.

We would observe here, brethren, that although the appointment of the Commission was, we hope, well intended, yet we believe it was unhappily selected as to a part of it, from what appeared in the prosecution of their mission. A number of that body, however, both preachers and elders, were meek and friendly disposed men, who felt themselves as brethren disposed to pursue the most pacific measures, according to their order from the stated Synod, to heal the breach that threatened the church. But on the contrary it is notorious, that another part of that body were men of different tempers; and it was an unfortunate circumstance that those men were the most forward, influential members.

After the commission had met, and also the accused, who were then known as the majority of the Cumberland Presbytery, the Commission selected from the minutes and other sources, a number of irregularities, as chargeable against the majority of the Presbytery, all of which, however, were comprised in the two following particulars, viz: 1st, The licensing unlearned men, or such as had not been examined on the learned languages, &c. 2d, That those men who were licensed, both learned and unlearned, were only required to adopt the Confession of Faith partially; that is, as far as they believed it to agree with the word of God.

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\* There was much noise about so many exhorters having been authorized by the Presbytery. The members thought with the apostle, that it was the duty and privilege of all christians to exhort in some manner; and the design they had in licensing such as made application was to give them more weight among the people, without the most distant prospect of licensing them to preach except those whose talents might justify such an act.

As to the first ground of complaint, the Presbytery not only plead the exception made in the discipline in extraordinary cases, but also the example of a number of the Presbyteries in different parts of the United States.\* They moreover, appealed to a higher authority than either of the foregoing, which was the New Testament, and inquired if there was any precept or example in that, which condemned the practice of licensing what they (the Commission) called unlearned men to preach the Gospel. It was likewise asked, if God could not as easily call a Presbyterian to preach, who had not a liberal education, as he could a Methodist or Baptist, a number of whom are acknowledged to be respectable and useful ministers of Jesus Christ.

As to the second point, the Synod had suggested that the candidates could have adopted the "Alkoran," in the same manner they adopted the Confession of Faith. This was acknowledged to be literally true, but not applicable in the case of the young men; for the Presbytery contended that the very act of the candidates receiving the Confession at all, was an evidence that they esteemed it above all human creeds; and the exception, or condition, in which they are indulged, was only designed to meet some conscientious scruples, in points not fundamental nor essential, particularly the idea of FATALITY, that seemed to some of them to be there taught under the high and mysterious doctrine of predestination.

The reason offered by the Presbytery, on these points, did not appear satisfactory to the commission of Synod: therefore much altercation took place, during which time, no doubt but Christ was wounded *in the house of his friends*, by some, perhaps, of both Judicatures. It is well recollected, at any rate, that the Presbytery during the debate, were often reminded by certain members of the Commission that they stood at the Commissioner's BAR! Indeed, brethren, it appeared to us very evident, that some of the leading members of that body, assumed atti-

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\* Among the many instances of this kind that might be mentioned are the following, viz: Mr. Beck, who was received by the Presbytery in North Carolina; Mr. Bloodworth, by Orange; Mr. Moore, by Hanover; Mr. Marquis, by Redstone, and Mr. Kemper and Abell by the Transylvania Presbytery. Likewise, in Pennsylvania, many years ago, a poor illiterate man, a native of Wales, conceiving that he had an internal call to preach the gospel, made his case known to the Presbytery. But, because he was not sufficiently acquainted with the English language to undergo an examination of it, or in any other but his mother tongue, the Presbytery therefore, instead of treating him without notice, sent to Virginia for President Davis, who was also a native of Wales, to perform the necessary examination previous to licensure, who on his return to Virginia, declared that he never had assisted in bringing a man into the ministry with greater freedom in his life.

In short, the majority of the Cumberland Presbytery were of opinion, that the compilers of the Confession of Faith and discipline of our church, never intended to it be considered an infallible standard by which the Holy Ghost must be limited, when he calls men to that sacred office. They had no doubt but that reverend body, at the same time that they laid down those prudential rules, believed that the great Head of the church could, and actually did, when he thought proper, bring men into the ministry without the aid of those literary qualifications; and if granted that he might in one instance, why not in more, yea, why not in many? Who will limit the Holy one of Israel?



itudes and an authority, which but illy comported with the character of ministers of the meek and lowly Jesus, sent on a pacific mission.

After much reasoning, as well as positive assertion on the subject, the Commission demanded of the Presbytery, to give up to them all those men whom they had licensed and ordained for re-examination. The Presbytery refused, suggesting the danger of the example, and also that such a demand was without precedent. They moreover declared, that they believed the discipline of the Presbyterian churches had vested the sole power in the several Presbyteries, to judge of the faith and qualifications of their own candidates for the Ministry.

After the refusal of the Presbytery, the Moderator of the Commission proceeded to adjure the young men to submit to their authority and be re-examined, when one of them asked liberty for himself and brethren to retire, and ask counsel of God before they would give an answer. This reasonable request was, at first, strongly opposed by one or two leading members of the Commission, but at length it was granted, and the young men retired to ask counsel of him who is all wise. In a short time after they returned, when they were asked, individually, if they would submit as above. They all, except one or two, who wanted longer time to deliberate, answered in the negative, for the following reasons, viz: First. They believed the Cumberland Presbytery, which was a regular Church Judicature, to be competent judges of the faith and abilities of their own candidates. Secondly. That they themselves had not been charged with heresy and immorality, and, if they had, the Presbytery would have been the proper Judicature first to have called them to an account. Notwithstanding the Commission of Synod proceeded formally to prohibit all the men, learned and unlearned, whom the Cumberland Presbytery had licensed and ordained, from preaching the Gospel in the name of Presbyterians, and also, cited what was called the Old Members to attend the next stated session of Synod, to be examined on fait<sup>h</sup>, and to answer for not having given up their young brethren to be re-examined!

Here, brethren, we would ask, knowing that a number of you have been from thirty to forty years regular members of the Presbyterian church, if ever you knew an instance, either in Europe or America, of a Synod undertaking to prohibit preachers, who had not been accused by their own or any other Presbytery? We would also ask, if ever you knew an instance of any reformed church Judicature silencing a minister or ministers, who had not been charged with heresy, immorality, nor even what our discipline calls contumacy? This was certainly the case with the young men. That is, they were not charged with either of the above, yet, they were prohibited and the Presbytery censured because they would not acknowledge the authority by which it was done.

The members of Presbytery then retired (but not in a Presbyterial capacity) to consult what was best to be done, and after deliberation, they agreed to encourage the young men to continue the exercise of their respective functions, which they themselves determined to do, except in such business as required the act of a Presbytery.

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\*On the principles of the Commission's demand, no Presbytery would know when there was an addition made to their body by a new ordination, in as much as the next Synod might demand a re-examination of the newly ordained minister, judge him unqualified, and declare he should no longer preach as a Presbyterian.

Some months after, there was a general meeting or Council, held at Shilo consisting of the ministers, elders, and representatives from vacancies, which formerly composed a majority of the Cumberland Presbytery. At that Council, it was agreed on to petition the General Assembly, and in the mean time, cease our operations as a Presbytery; but continue to meet from time to time in the capacity of a Council, and promote the interests of the church as well as we could, until an answer could be obtained from the Assembly. The Council, at this meeting, unanimously declared it to be their opinion, that the Commission of Synod had acted contrary to Discipline, which opinion was corroborated by the next Assembly, (though not officially,) according to a private letter from a respectable member of that body, a part of which is as follows.

“The unhappy differences in your quarter, so immediately succeeding what a great proportion of the Presbyterian interest, in this place, believed to be a great revival of the work of God, has excited deep concern, and our General Assembly have had the matter fully before them. It appeared to be the decided opinion of the majority in the General Assembly, that no Synod have a right to proceed against ministers or individuals, except the matter shall have come before them, by appeal from the Presbytery.—That only a Presbytery could call its members to an account for errors in doctrine or practice.—That a man once ordained by a Presbytery is an ordained minister, though the Presbytery may have acted improperly in not requiring the due qualification; and that even a Presbytery could not afterwards depose, but for cause arising, or made public after ordination; that licentiates are always in the power of their Presbytery to examine them and to withdraw their licensure at discretion: but, that a Synod may act against a Presbytery as such, by dissolving, dividing, censuring, &c. consequently, that the dealings with Cumberland Presbytery were legal, in dissolving them, and annexing them to Transylvania, but wholly improper in suspending ordained ministers, and still more improper was it for a Commission of Synod to do it. But though the rule about the knowledge of languages in our discipline is not often fully complied with, and though the rule is not found in the scriptures, yet it is so important, that though your case was an imperious one, yet they seemed to fear you had gone too far, especially in the licensures. But what the General Assembly hath finally done, will appear very inconclusive on these points; because they wished to avoid offending the Synod and the Presbytery; and the minority in the Assembly took advantage of this, to make the business end as much as possible in such a manner, as not to be so construed against the power of Synods and General Assemblies. The General Assembly have, however, questioned the regularity of the proceedings of your Synod.”

You may see brethren, in the foregoing extracts, what was the decided opinion of what may be called the collected wisdom of the Presbyterian Church in the United States on the points for which we contend. And, perhaps, in examining the list of Commissioners who composed the Assembly, the members will be found to stand as high for learning, integrity and piety as a subsequent Assembly, which differed with them in opinion. You will moreover see the reason why we were not profited by the favorable opinion of the Assembly. As to the Assembly's fearing we had ‘gone too far in the licensures,’ we will not pretend to say their fears were altogether without foundation; nevertheless, the Presbytery that have been without sin on this subject, ‘may cast the first stone.’—That is, the Presbytery that



have licensed as many as the Cumberland Presbytery have done, and have licensed no improper person to preach the gospel.\*

The Assembly addressed a letter to the Synod informing them, what they had done "was at least of questionable regularity," and requested them to review their proceedings, and rectify what might have been done amiss. The Synod we understood, reviewed, but confirmed all their Commission had done. The Council, notwithstanding, were encouraged to forward another petition, after which they were informed by a private letter, from another influential member of the Assembly, that it would be most proper for them to apply to the Synod to rescind their former order, as it respected the Presbytery; and if they refused, then for the Council to appeal to the Assembly, which "no doubt would redress their grievances." The official letter of that Assembly, not having come to hand, the Council thought it prudent to postpone doing any thing in it, until such letter could be seen. After it was seen, a number of the members of Council thought the prospect of a redress of grievances not flattering; and at the next Council it was voted by a large majority to go into a constituted state, and in that capacity, address the General Assembly; but by reason of the minority refusing to acquiesce in what the majority had done, the Council did not still constitute a Presbytery. After some time, some of those who were of the majority, felt willing to comply with the recommendation of the member, who wrote to us, and told us to go up by appeal from the Synod, but before there was an opportunity of doing it, we heard to our astonishment, that the Assembly had decided in favor of the Synod. This step at once superceded the necessity of an appeal: therefore the Council generally thought it was now time to constitute into a Presbytery, and proceed to business again in that capacity. But some of the members, wished to make the last effort with the Synod, which now had the business in their own hands, and the whole agreed at the Ridge meeting house in August last, to propose their last terms, and forward them to the Transylvanian Presbytery, or Synod, by two Commissioners to be appointed for that purpose, which was accordingly done, and the terms in substance were as follows:

"We, the preachers belonging to the Council, both old and young, from a sincere desire to be in union with the general body of the Presbyterian church, are willing to be examined on the tenets of our holy religion, by the Transylvania Presbytery, Synod, or a committee appointed for that purpose: taking along the idea, however, that we be received or rejected as a connected body. Also, all our ministers, ordained and licentiates retain their former authority derived from the Cumberland Presbytery. It was moreover understood, that if the Synod should require the preachers to re-adopt the Confession of Faith, that it should be with the exception of FATALITY only." Our Commissioners were directed to go, and take a copy of the above minute, without any discretionary power whatever, or to alter the propositions in any way, and it was unanimously agreed and determined, that if the Synod would not accede to the propositions, that on the fourth Tuesday in Oct. ensuing, the whole Council would go into a constituted state. The Commissioners accordingly went to the Synod; and after their return, informed us that the Synod would not consider our case as a body, but as

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\*The Cumberland Presbytery have reason to thank God, that every man whom they licensed, except one individual, continues to believe, preach and practice the Gospel of Christ.

individuals; neither would they suffer any of our preachers to make the exception to the Confession of Faith. The Commissioners, notwithstanding, obtained an order for an intermediate Presbytery "to be held at Green Town, to consider the case of Mr. Hodge and others." Here, brethren, we will insert for your information, the Minute of the last Council, and also the preamble to the Minute of our first Presbytery.

"The Council met at Shilo, agreeably to adjournment on the fourth Tuesday in October, 1809. Whereupon Mr. King was appointed to the Chair, and Thos. Donald, Clerk. The Council opened by prayer.

"Enquiry was made, what progress the Commissioners had made at the Transylvania Presbytery or Synod, towards bringing about a reconciliation; and how those Judicatures had treated the propositions of the Council. Mr. Hodge, after some preliminary remarks, in which he suggested, that he thought the Commissioners had obtained a compliance with the substance of the Council's propositions, read a copy of a petition he had presented to the Synod and the Synod's order on that petition. After the matter was discussed, and after the Minute of the last Council on that subject was read, and compared with the petition and order above; the vote was taken whether or not the Synod had complied with the propositions of the Council, which was decided in the negative, by a very large majority. The vote was then taken, whether or not the Council would put the resolution of last Council into execution, which went solemnly to declare, that unless the Synod acceded to their propositions, they would on this day, constitute into a Presbytery, which was carried in the affirmative by a large majority; after which Messrs. William and Samuel Hodge, ministers, and Thomas Donald, elder, withdrew from the Council, virtually declaring their intention to join the Transylvania Presbytery. There being then only three ordained ministers present, it was inquired whether they were now ready to go into a constituted state; when it was found that one of them was embarrassed in his mind. The Council then adjourned and met again, waiting the decision of that member; who at length declared he could not feel free at the present time to constitute. The Council then, together with all the licentiates and candidates present, formed into a committee and entered upon a free conversation on the subject before them; when it was finally agreed to, that each ordained minister, licentiate, elder, and representative should continue in union, and use their influence to keep the societies in union, until the third Tuesday in March next; and then meet at the Ridge Meeting House. After which, each one shall be released from this bond, unless previously to that time, three ordained ministers belonging to this body shall have constituted a Presbytery. Then, in that case, the committee will all consider the bond of union perpetual; which Presbytery, after doing such business as they may think proper, are to adjourn to meet at the Ridge Meeting house the said third Tuesday in March in a Presbyterial capacity."

SAMUEL KING, Chairman.

"In Dixon County, Tennessee State, at the Rev. Samuel M'Adow's this 4th day of February' 1810.

"We Samuel M'Adow, Finis Ewing, and Samuel King, regularly ordained ministers, in the Presbyterian church, against whom no charge, either of immorality or heresy has ever been exhibited, before any of the church Judicatures, having waited in vain more than four years, in the meantime, petitioning the



General Assembly for a redress of grievances, and a restoration of our violated rights, have, and do hereby agree and determine, to constitute into a Presbytery, known by the name of the Cumberland Presbytery, on the following conditions.

All candidates for the ministry, who may hereafter be licensed by this Presbytery, and all the licentiates or probationers, who may hereafter be ordained by this Presbytery, shall be required, before such licensure and ordination, to receive and adopt the Confession and Discipline of the Presbyterian church, except the idea of fatality, that seems to be taught under the mysterious doctrine of predestination. It is to be understood, however, that such as can clearly receive the Confession, without an exception, shall not be required to make any. Moreover, all licentiates before they are set apart to the whole work of the ministry, or ordained, shall be required to undergo an examination on English Grammar, Geography, Astronomy, Natural and Moral Philosophy, and Church History.\* The Presbytery may also require an examination on all, or any part, of the above branches of literature before licensure if they deem it expedient."

Thus, brethren, we have, in the integrity of our hearts, endeavored to give you as correct and impartial an account of the rise and progress of the cause or causes, that have brought us into our present situation, as justice to ourselves, and our best recollection would admit. We have not intentionally and unjustly exposed or covered the conduct of any man or Judicature. We have only aimed at giving a clear, honest view of the matter, that you might be enabled to judge for yourselves whether we have acted with propriety or impropriety.

We think, precipitancy or rashness cannot be justly imputed to us in the present case. We have waited in an unorganized state, for more than four years, and in that time, have repeatedly prayed the Judicatures to redress our grievances; and have not contended for one privilege but what we conscientiously believe God's word allows us. If we had sought or desired an occasion to make a schism in the church, we had an excellent pretext, after the unprecedented conduct of the Commission of Synod towards us. But instead of this, we voluntarily suspended our operations at a Presbytery, and waited from year to year, beset on every side, hoping the matter might be settled on principles just and equitable. We said "beset on every side." Yes, brethren, a number of you know that various sectaries took the advantage of our forbearance and peculiar situation, and endeavored to rend our flourishing congregations. The swarms of heretics and fanatics also, who came down from the upper counties of Kentucky, gave us much perplexity; yet we determined, through grace to stand firm, and continue to appeal to the reason and justice of the higher Judicatures, until we were assured they were not disposed to restore our rights. This assurance we have at length obtained, and there was no alternative left us, but either to violate our solemn vows to our brethren, act contrary to our reason and conscience, or form ourselves into a Presbytery, separate from the Kentucky Synod. This step, at first view, may alarm some of you; but be assured, brethren, that although we are not now united to the Presbyterian church by the external bond of discipline, that we feel as much union in heart as formally; and we would further assure you, that we have not set up as a party, inimical to the general Presbyterian

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\*It will not be understood that examinations on experimental religion and Theology will be omitted.

church:—no: we, ourselves, are Presbyterians, and expect ever to remain so, whether united to the general body or not.

Permit us further to inform you what we know to be an incontestable fact. That is, there are a number of ministers who are kept in the bosom of the Presbyterian church, who have deviated infinitely more from the Confession than we have done. One can boldly deny the imputation of Christ's active obedience to the sinner in justification, and published it to the world—another can deny the operation of the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration,\* and yet, we, who only object to the unqualified idea of ETERNAL reprobation, cannot be indulged in that objection!

It has been said that if all the ministers belonging to the Council, had continued together, and had constituted into a Presbytery, it would have been much better. Brethren, if individuals, for reasons best known to themselves, and their God, have thought proper to change a position in which we thought God had blessed them, we have not yet felt at liberty to do so likewise. We have to account to God, and our own consciences how we have acted in this matter.

Some have feared because of the smallness of our number. Brethren, we have yet left, in the bounds of our Presbytery, almost as many ministers, exclusive of candidates, as our blessed Lord chose to spread the gospel through the world. And whilst we acknowledge the greatest inferiority to those twelve CHAMPIONS of the gospel, yet, we profess to believe that neither the standing, nor reputation of a people depends on their numbers. If this were admitted, the Roman church, when it was at its zenith of superstition and idolatry, would have been the most permanent, and respectable in the world. But the Reformation and subsequent events have taught us that was not the case with her. But notwithstanding, some individuals have changed their ground, yet, as far as we have learned, but very few of the numerous and respectable societies or congregations have abandoned us: and some individuals of those few, were partly constrained to do as they have done, from their local situation.

Some of you are afraid you cannot be supplied by the Presbytery. Brethren, the same Almighty *Lord of the harvest*, who heard your prayers on that subject ten years ago, is willing to hear again. *Is the harvest indeed great but the laborers few?* well then, pray the Lord to send more laborers.

Some fear lest the Presbytery should take too much liberty in licensing and ordaining unlearned men. If by this you mean, you are afraid the Presbytery, in some instances, will dispense with the dead languages, your fears are well grounded. But if you are afraid we will license and ordain without a good English education, we hope your fears are without foundation. And while we thus candidly declare our intention to receive men as candidates, without a knowledge of the languages, who are men of good talents, and who appear to be evidently CALLED of God, believing, as we do, that there are thousands in the Presbyterian church of such description, who would make more able, respectable, and more useful ministers of Jesus Christ, than many who say they have been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel: we would nevertheless recommend it to all parents who have sons who promise fair for the ministry, to have them taught the Greek language, especially the Greek Testament. Some of us intend to do

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\*See Mr. Davis' publication in S. Carolina and Mr. Craighead's of Tenn.



### ERRATA.

In the history of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, page 587, line 8, from the top, for "avocation," read "*vocation.*"

Page 611, in the 11th line from the bottom, for "doctrine," read "*doctrines.*"

Page 612, line 26, for "consolatory," read "*conciliatory.*"

Page 632, 2d line from the bottom, for "1806," read "*1807.*"

Page 642, line 11, for "course," read "*cause.*"

Page 644, line 20, for "names," read "*name.*"

Page 648, line 24, for "the Synod of 1816," read "*the Synod of 1814.*"

Page 653, line 32, for "disposed," read "*despised.*"

Page 654, for "tanto," read "*toto.*"





ourselves what we here recommend, and thereby more fully convince you of our sincerity.

We would just add, that we have it in view as a Presbytery to continue, or make another proposition to the Synod of Kentucky, or some other Synod, for a re-union, if we can obtain it without violating our natural and scriptural rights, it will meet the most ardent wish of our hearts; If we cannot, we hope to be enabled to commit ourselves and cause to HIM who is able to keep us. Brethren, if we live at the feet of the Redeemer and feel constant dependence on Him, we are not afraid but that he will be our God and director. And if *God be for us who can be against us?* We therefore entreat you brethren, to *watch and be sober*.

Cultivate friendship with all societies of Christians, who maintain the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, and whose lives comport with their profession; but avoid the multitude of deceivers, who have gone out into the world, and strike at the root of all real religion.—Avoid them we entreat you, as you would the open enemies of the cross of Christ.

*Gird on the whole armour of God. Fight the good fight of faith, live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you.—Amen."*

SAMUEL M'ADOW, Moderator.

Test—YOUNG EWING, Clerk.

F I N I S .













# DATE DUE

<del>APR 0 7 1993</del>		APR 0 7 1993	
<del>JUL 30 '66</del>		MAY 6 1995	
<del>AUG 22 '66</del>			
<del>JAN 30 '73</del>			
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